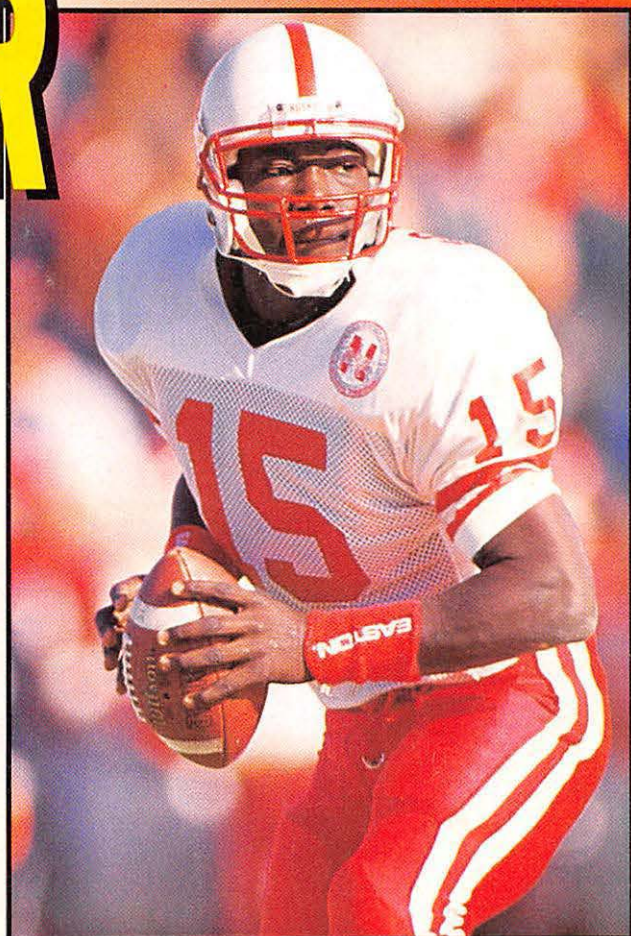
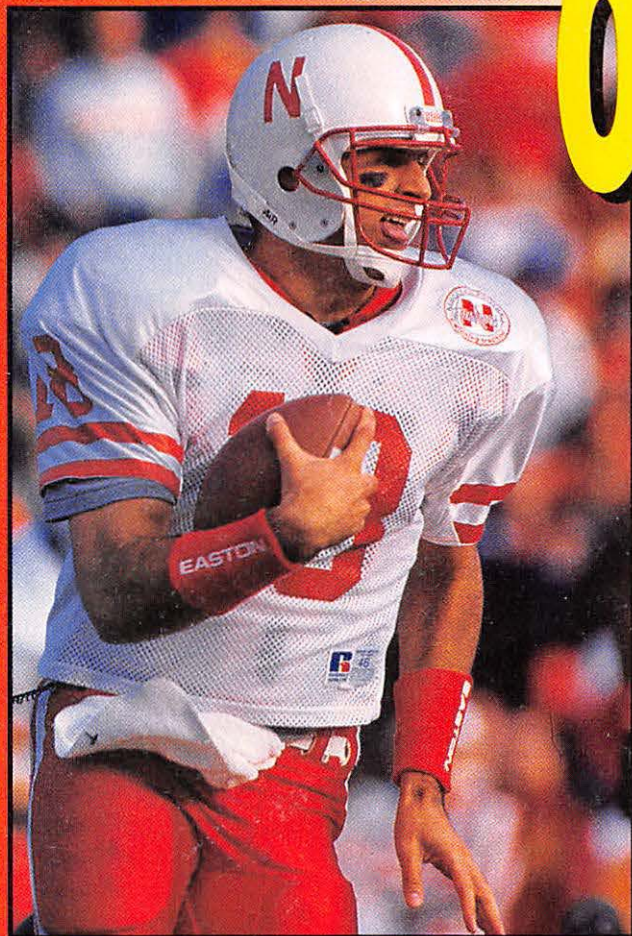


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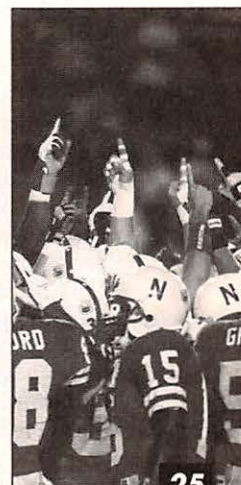
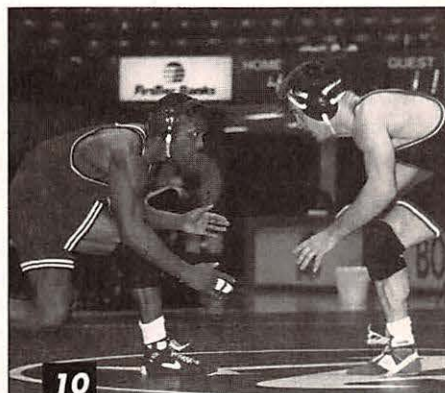
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Critics said the recruiting classes were sub-par, but Tom Osborne proved them wrong by winning a national title last season.



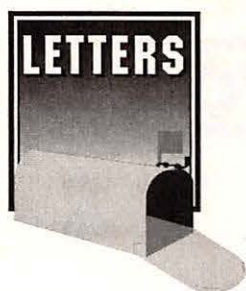
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NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue (May — Vol. 15, No. 5) will mail by April 28.



I'm not worthy! I didn't know how I could get any more excited after watching the Huskers hand Miami its head with attitude intact. But they I received your national championship tribute issue. This was easily the best magazine I have ever owned. I liked *Sports Illustrated's* commemorative issue, but it lacked the insight and home team feel that yours provided.

A subscriber since you began in the mid 1970s, I have waited for a national title and the magazine to follow. I can die happy now that both dreams have come true.

Barry Townsend
Topeka, Kan.

I've got an addition to your Best and Worst list in the last issue — Best Magazine Hands Down: *Huskers Illustrated*. Keep up the great work.

Todd Thomas
Minneapolis, Minn.

For the unfortunate who couldn't make the trip to Miami, here's a thank you for the excellent pictures in your last issue. I liked all the game pictures, but the behind-the-scenes pictures were the best. It was amazing to see how many people line up to hear Coach Tom Osborne speak. He's the man.

Robert Simmons
San Jose, Calif.

Only at Nebraska can two quarterbacks take their turn in the spotlight and not act like babies. I have always bragged about how unselfish the players at Nebraska are, but now I have the proof.

Many of my friends couldn't believe that Tommie Frazier started ahead of Brook Berringer. But they all thought both handled the situation with total class. This old man takes his hat off to those young men.

Jon Huggins
Long Island, N.J.

The volleyball team is the best in the country. I don't care that they didn't win the national title and I

won't even entertain talk of a weak schedule. I had the opportunity to see them play this year and I'd pit our team against any other in a five-game series.

Result — Nebraska comes out on top.

Joe Drake
Lincoln, Neb.

More basketball please. I, like many of my Big Red brethren, live and die by the football team. But we've won our title and it's time to move on.

Sure, the hoop team has had a rough time this year, but they're still the best thing going on right now. When spring ball starts I'll get into the football mood, but for right now, give me more hoops.

Gary Vincent
Omaha, Neb.

I never thought I would say this, but I was bored this year as football signing day came and went. With Nebraska all but locking up its class nearly a month before the Feb. 1 signing day I had little opportunity to spend thousands of dollars calling 900 numbers and bugging the people at *Huskers Illustrated*. Although my wife deeply appreciated the way this class came together because I had time for those little chores that had been building up, I need more suspense.

I know this is the classic example of some people never being satisfied. I'm sure that next year as the best day of the year comes, I'll be writing wondering if we can get the class established early.

Keith Sullivan
Baltimore, Md.

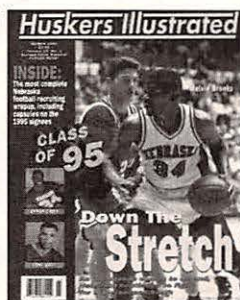
The *Omaha World Herald* and *Lincoln Journal Star* need to take your recruiting special (Vol. 15, No. 3) and steal some ideas for next year. Their two sentence evaluations of the players pales in comparison to your in-depth articles on each player. I have kept every recruiting special you've printed and use them as a bible as the players come into their own.

I will still get the papers, but I'll bronze yours.

Cane Richards
Omaha, Neb.

Thanks for your kind words concerning our recruiting special. We are very

proud of it and do think it's the best source for Nebraska football recruiting. But in defense of the two papers you mentioned, they have to publish the day after signing day and we have the luxury of having two weeks. — Editor

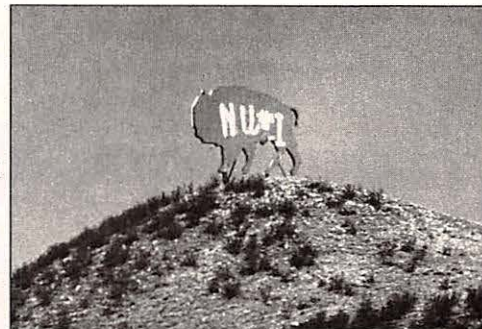


I really enjoyed your recruiting special. It's the one I wait for every year. I am what you call a recruiting freak. Now I need your help. It seems like every year we read about all these great players and then only see a handful ever play. What happens to the other guys? Can you let me know?

Bryan Dornbos
Houston, Texas

You've read our minds. We decided to take a look at the last four classes to see how they have done at Nebraska. Check out what we dug up on page ??.

— Editor



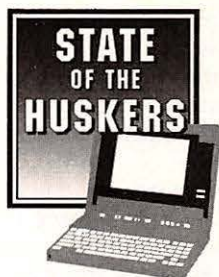
Living in Wyoming has one major drawback — we are next to Colorado. That requires putting up with their crybaby press and residents. They always have an excuse for their failures. This season's crushing victory over the Buffs was nearly as wonderful as the Orange Bowl victory.

I am enclosing a photograph (above) of a properly adorned Buffalo that is located near the Wyoming/Colorado state boarder. The embellishment appeared the day after Nebraska humiliated the Buffs once again.

L. Bruce Hendrickson
Cheyenne, Wy.

...

We would like to see your opinions on NU athletics. Please send your comments and questions to *Letters*, P.O. Box 83222, Lincoln, Neb. 68501. *Huskers Illustrated* reserves the right to edit prior to printing. We will not return material unless a self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed. ■



Big 12 is Causing Big Stress

Economic necessity formed the Big 12 Conference, but will the sacrifices prove to be too large?

By MIKE BABCOCK

By the time you read this, or soon after, the Big 12 Conference could have a commissioner. The conference, a combination of the Big Eight and four members of the Southwest Conference, is scheduled to begin operating in just over a year — July 1, 1996.

The choice of a commissioner will be a significant indication of the new league's direction.

Plans for the conference were announced a year ago. Texas A&M, Texas, Texas Tech and Baylor announced they would leave the Southwest Conference and join the Big Eight schools in creating a 12-team league.

The original plan, according to Big Eight officials, was that the Texas schools would be joining

rather than reshaping an existing conference.

The Texas schools would be coming in under "our rules," Nebraska athletic director Bill Byrne said when the plan was announced in Lincoln.

That hasn't been the case, however. In fact, the influence of the Texas schools has been such that there is concern they might be taking over the structuring of the Big 12 by voting as a block on conference matters.

Such a concern was underscored by the fact that Steve Hatchell, the Southwest Conference commission-



The leading candidate for the Big 12 commissioner job is Steve Hatchell, who served in the same capacity for the Southwest Conference.

er, was considered a front-runner among four candidates for the job as Big 12 commissioner. Hatchell also has ties to the Big Eight, having served as an assistant commissioner for the conference. He was the executive director of the Orange Bowl after leaving the Big Eight office.

The other candidates were, or still are, Kansas athletic director Bob Frederick, Missouri Valley Conference senior associate commissioner Patty Viverito, and Ohio Valley Conference commissioner Dan Beebe.

Other evidence of the Southwest Conference schools' influence on the direction the Big 12 will take

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includes the possibility that the conference office might be moved from Kansas City, Mo., to Dallas, Texas. The Big Eight headquarters have always been in Kansas City. In fact, when Nebraska joined Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and Washington University of St. Louis to form the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association in January 1907, it did so in Kansas City.

The MVIAA became the Big Six, the Big Seven and finally in 1957, the Big Eight. The name of the conference wasn't officially changed from MVIAA to the Big Eight until 1964.

Regardless of who becomes the Big 12 commissioner, it is likely Kansas City will have to out-bid Dallas and any other interested major metropolitan area for the right to house the conference offices. Financial considerations are driving the conference's creation.

Further, in June 1991, the chief executive officers of the Big 12 schools met in Ames, Iowa, to approve a divisional alignment for competition in football and men's and women's basketball. That alignment placed Nebraska in a northern division, along with Kansas, Kansas

State, Missouri, Colorado and Iowa State. Oklahoma and Oklahoma State joined the four Texas schools in a southern division.

Looked at in one way, instead of a 12-team conference, there would be two six-team conferences. The Big Eight would be reduced by two schools and a financially strapped Southwest Conference would be revitalized, four schools replaced with two.

Because of the divisional alignment, Nebraska and Oklahoma no longer will play each other in football on an annual basis. As Big 12 schedules now stand, the Cornhuskers and Sooners won't play in 1998 and 1999, 2002 and 2003, and so on. Two years on, two years off.

A divisional alignment would facilitate a championship playoff in football. But such a playoff apparently wouldn't be as financially attractive as originally thought. Rather than holding a playoff, the Big 12 is looking at ways to maximize its participation in the bowl alliance.

There were rumors of separate post-season basketball tournaments for the two divisions, with one in

Kansas City and one in Dallas. That almost certainly won't be the case, but the issue of moving the men's post-season tournament out of Kansas City hasn't been resolved long-term.

The Big Eight has an agreement through the end of the century to play the men's tournament in Kemper Arena in Kansas City. After that, though, it's difficult to say what might happen.

The four Texas schools also have attempted to influence such matters as allowing the recruitment of athletes who don't meet freshman eligibility standards under the NCAA's evolving Proposition 48.

That the Big 12 Conference is being formed out of economic necessity can't be argued. The Big Eight schools and the four Texas schools need each other for their athletic survival.

But as the new conference takes shape, it becomes increasingly apparent that the Big Eight will be forced to sacrifice its identity and, perhaps, much of its tradition. The naming of a commissioner will be an important element in defining how much. ■

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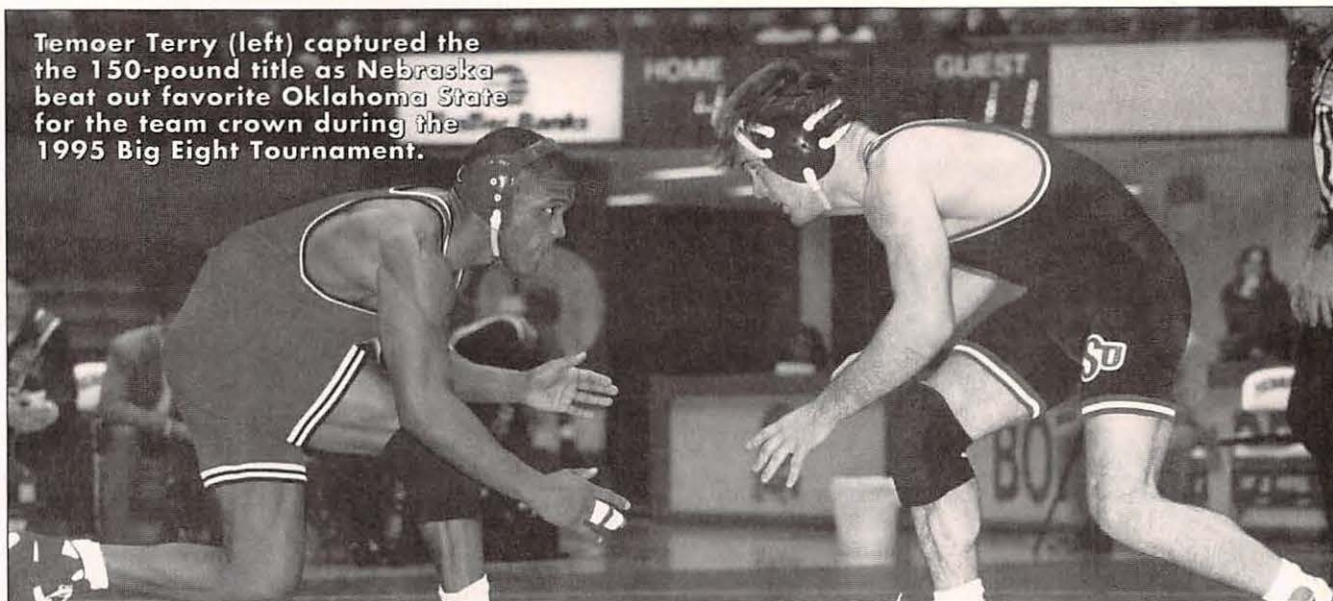
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Temoer Terry (left) captured the 150-pound title as Nebraska beat out favorite Oklahoma State for the team crown during the 1995 Big Eight Tournament.



Grappling With Change

Its second conference title in three years is helping Nebraska finally escape that "program on the rise" label

Going by perception alone, Oklahoma State most often will be favored to capture team titles in the Big Eight Conference Wrestling Championships. It's only natural.

This year, those close to the situation regarded the 62nd version of the league tournament as a wide-open race. But many of those same people were making the Cowboys the slight favorite, and not just because their No. 2 national ranking was the highest in the five-team field.

You see, Oklahoma State entered the 1995 tournament with 23 crowns in the conference championships, which is more titles than any other league team has won. Since 1987, the Cowboys have won outright or tied for six league titles. They relinquished the team championship in 1992 as a self-imposed penalty for NCAA rules violations.

Make no mistake, the Cowboys deserve this image as a collegiate wrestling power. They've earned

their status both in the Big Eight and nationally.

But they found out March 5 in Lincoln, Neb., that perceptions don't necessarily win Big Eight Championship meets. Nebraska Coach Tim Neumann felt he had the team to beat all along. He was going on more than perceptions. He was basing his assessment on talent and the relative strength of the teams' lineups. But Neumann — a modest, down-to-earth sort — wasn't predicting victory before the meet. At least not for publication.

And that perception thing? It's still there, Neumann says.

"I don't think the perception is changing," Neumann said. "I had a million people telling me before the meet that Oklahoma State is favored, so they'll probably win. I kept working it out on paper, and there was just no way they could win it. But I couldn't just go and say that."

In the days before the tournament, Neumann didn't go public with his true feelings about his team's chances.

"But it was our meet to lose," Neumann said. "I thought that because we don't have a real bad weight."

And that is not just perception. That's fact.

The Huskers — who entered the tournament ranked No. 3 in the nation — had four individual champions and five third-place finishers en route to an 83 1/2-point team total. Oklahoma State finished second with 67 1/2 points, followed by No. 15 Oklahoma with 65, No. 4 Iowa State with 49 and Missouri with 44.

Nebraska's champions and third-place finishers automatically qualified for the March 16-18 NCAA Championships in Iowa City, Iowa. The Huskers qualified a 10th wrestler — 167-pounder Erik Josephson, a fourth-place Big Eight finisher who received a wild-card bid.

Nebraska's Big Eight Championships lineup had only one senior. However, Oklahoma State took five freshmen and three sopho-

mores to the NCAA meet, so don't be surprised if the Cowboys are favored at next year's Big Eight meet.

"It takes a long time for perceptions to change," Nebraska's Neumann said. "Maybe not facts, but perceptions. Every time I get introduced at a banquet, it goes like this: 'And here's Tim Neumann, the coach of one of the most up-and-coming programs in the nation.'"

Neumann's question: How do you escape the "up-and-coming" designation? When will *that* perception change?

"I guess you have to win it 10 times, and then they'll start saying you're cheating if you do that," Neumann said.

With a few more performances like it turned in March 5, Nebraska won't be regarded for much longer as only "an up-and-coming" program. The Huskers might have shaken that stigma for good had it not been for a 29th-place finish in the 1994 NCAA Championships. That performance followed a program-best third-place finish in 1993.

Nebraska's Big Eight Championships crown was its second in three years and only the third such title in the program's history. The Huskers won in 1993 by a half-point after placing nine wrestlers in the finals. They found out they had prevailed two days after the meet when a scoring error was discovered by a couple sports writers in Des Moines, Iowa. Oklahoma State didn't compete in 1993 because it was on NCAA probation.

For Nebraska, that was a long-awaited title — its first came in 1949. But 1993's meet was a grueling, gut-wrenching experience for Neumann. The 1994 crown feels much better, he says.

"Today, we wrestled great," Neumann said March 5. "We had one bad match — in the semi-finals at 167. The rest of the day, the kids wrestled phenomenally."

The Huskers had three top seeds capture titles: senior Steve Baer at 126, sophomore Temoer Terry at 150 and sophomore Tolly Thompson at heavyweight. Third-seeded Jason Kraft earned a 4-2 upset of No. 2 seed Hardell Moore of Oklahoma State in the semifinals en route to the 158-pound crown.

Kraft was a redshirt freshman when Nebraska won the league championship in 1993.

"This feels so much better, because Oklahoma State was here,

all the teams were evenly matched, and we came out on top," Kraft said.

Kraft said that in his championship match, he benefited from the momentum Nebraska had picked up from its third-place finishers.

The Huskers caught fire in the consolation finals. They entered the round in third place with 43 points, 10 fewer than leader Oklahoma. But 118-pound sophomore Brad Canoyer started things off with a 5-4 win over Iowa State's Alfonso Cruz on a last-second takedown. Nebraska won four of its next five third-place matches and entered the championship matches with a 10-point lead over the Cowboys.

Tony DeAnda at 134, Mike

Eierman at 142, Kenny Mbah at 177 and Ryan Tobin at 190 also finished third for the Huskers.

"When we were down by 10, everybody was feeling kind of down," Neumann said. "We just told them it's a brand new tournament, that the parameters of the tournament have been set, and we all know how many guys everyone has in the finals. I said, 'We can't lose many more matches. We have to go out and really, really wrestle to win.' I told them, 'There really isn't a match we can't win from here on out,' and there really wasn't."

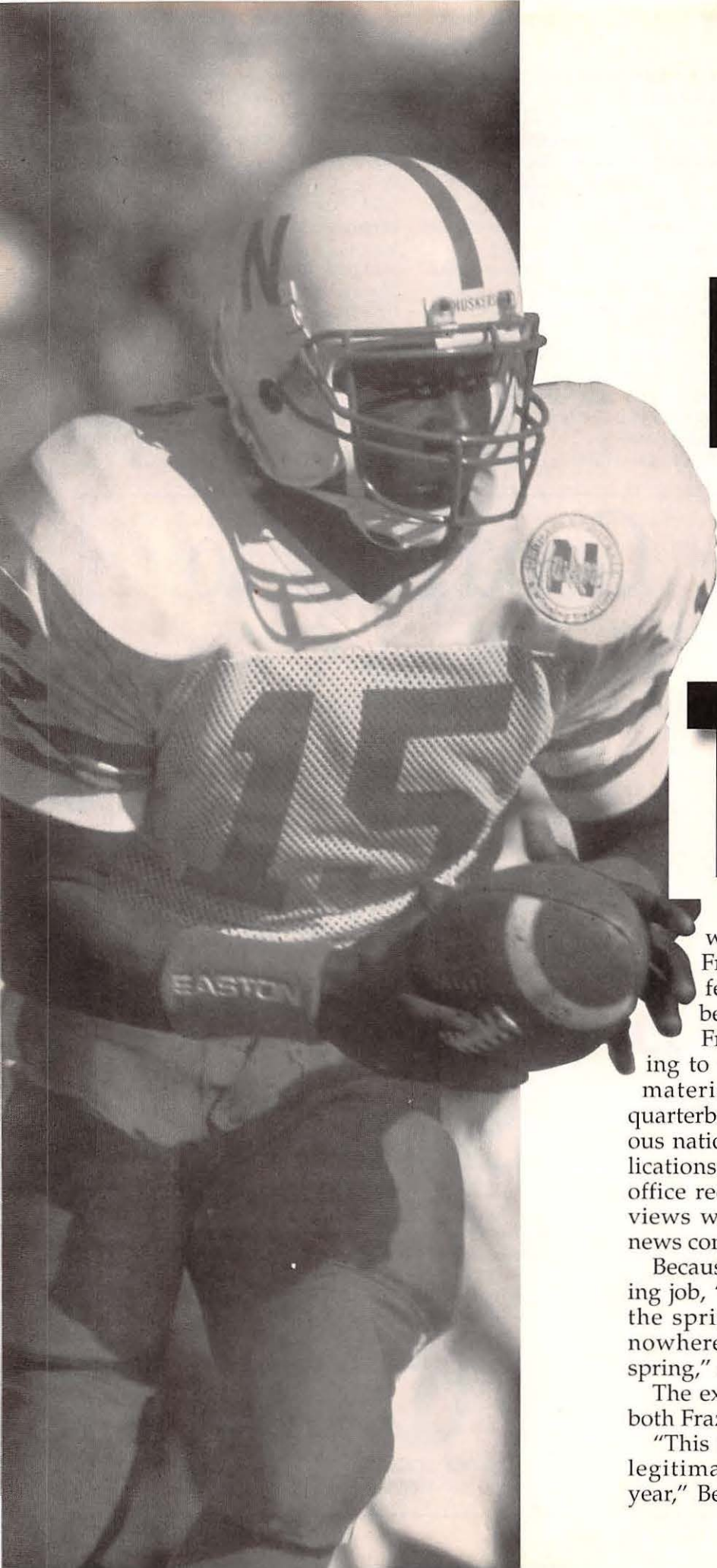
Neumann simply was trying to press the right buttons, and apparently he found the right ones. ■

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TWO-H DILE

Both Tommie Frazier and Brook Berringer are winners worthy of starting in 1995. But who will be the starter?

Tommie Frazier or Brook Berringer? That isn't the most critical question to be answered during spring football practice. But it's certain to be the most popular among Nebraska fans.

"Everyone will want to see who the starting quarterback is," Frazier said during a mini news conference conducted some two months before the beginning of spring drills.

Frazier and Berringer took turns talking to a small group of writers gathering material for stories on the Cornhusker quarterbacks. The stories will appear in various national preseason college football publications. The Nebraska sports information office received so many requests for interviews with Frazier and Berringer that the news conferences were arranged.

Because of their competition for the starting job, "we might have 75,000 show up for the spring game," Frazier said. "There's nowhere to hide from the cameras in the spring," said Berringer.

The experience this spring will be new to both Frazier and Berringer.

"This is the first time I feel like I have a legitimate shot at being the starter next year," Berringer said. "It's a confidence that

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**nd Brook Berringer are
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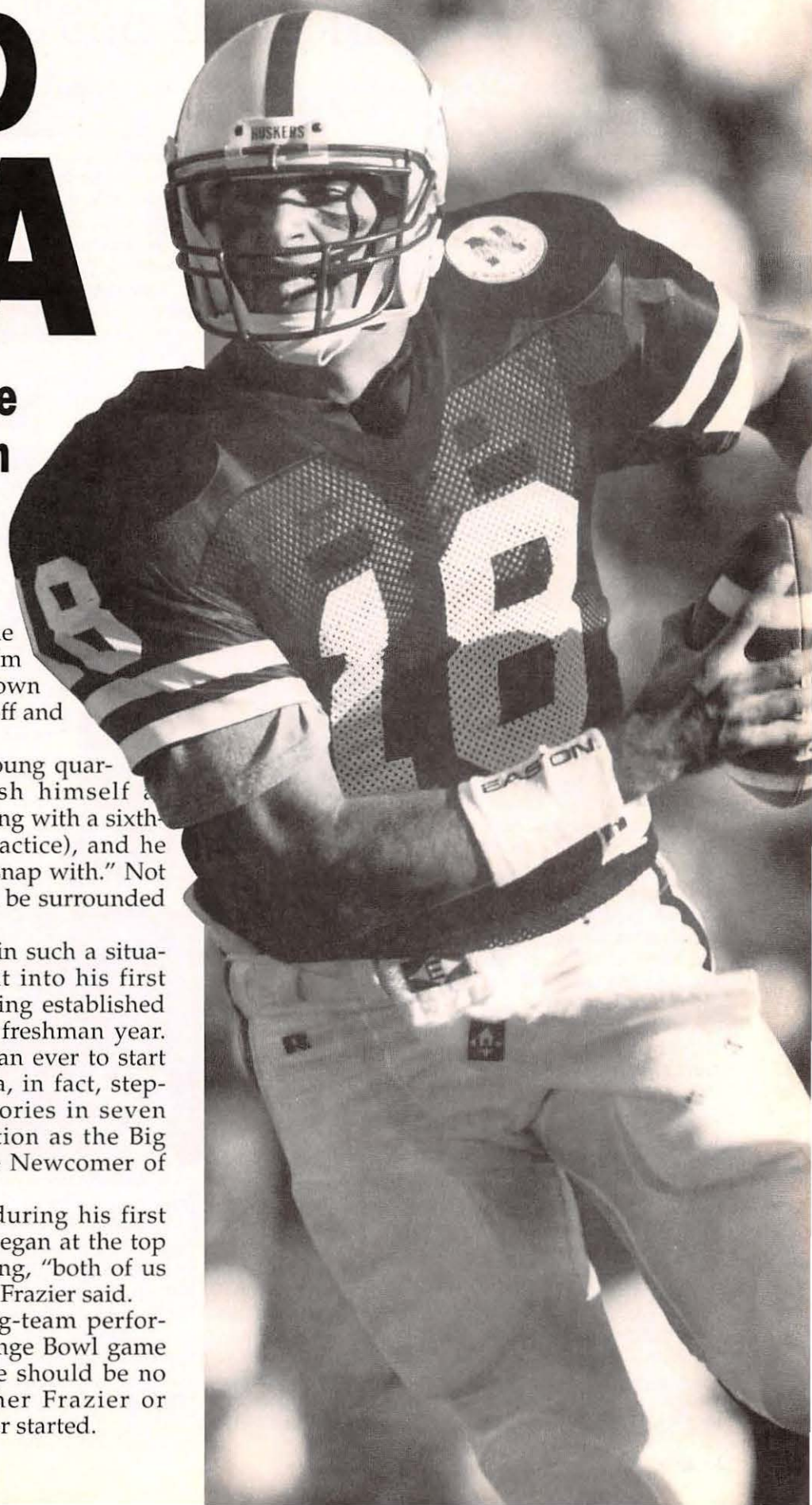
you get from playing with the top units. I know what I'm doing. I've got the offense down pat. That takes the pressure off and builds confidence."

Berringer said that as a young quarterback trying to establish himself at Nebraska, "I remember playing with a sixth-team guard at center (in practice), and he didn't know which hand to snap with." Not so now. He, like Frazier, will be surrounded by top-unit players.

Frazier really hasn't been in such a situation before, either. He went into his first spring as a Cornhusker having established himself as the starter in his freshman year. He was the first true freshman ever to start at quarterback for Nebraska, in fact, stepping up to direct five victories in seven starts and earning recognition as the Big Eight Conference Offensive Newcomer of the Year.

He still had to compete during his first spring at Nebraska. But he began at the top of the depth chart. This spring, "both of us are going to start from zero," Frazier said.

Given their successful tag-team performance during the 24-17 Orange Bowl game victory against Miami, there should be no great concern over whether Frazier or Berringer is the starter. Frazier started.



WHAT'S THE ANSWER

The story was that when Tommie Frazier was tackled by Warren Sapp, after coming back in relief of Brook Berringer during Nebraska's 24-17 Orange Bowl victory against Miami, the two had a brief conversation initiated by Sapp, the Hurricanes' talkative tackle.

According to one popular version of the story, the exchange went something like this:

Sapp: "Tommie, where have you been?"

Frazier: "Don't ask me where I've been, (deleted). Ask where I'm going."

Supposedly, the deleted part of Frazier's response was a personal insult based on a large posterior.

Was the story accurate? Well, not exactly. "I didn't say THAT," Frazier said recently, referring to the posterior part of the remark attributed to him. He and Sapp, both from Florida, were friends before the game. And they were friends after it.

Even so, the question about Frazier's response to Sapp's question needed to be answered, just as several important questions will have to be answered during spring practice at Nebraska.

Huskers Illustrated offers five such questions, in addition to the obvious, discussed in our annual spring preview: Who will emerge as the No. 1 quarterback?

• **What will happen if Darin Erstad signs a major league baseball contract?**

Actually, the question probably should be "when" Erstad signs. He's almost certain to be a first-round pick in the June draft; he could be the first position player selected, in fact. And if a major league team is that interested in him, it won't want him jeopardizing his baseball future kicking a football, even though NCAA rules now allow athletes to be professionals in one sport while retaining their collegiate eligibility in others.

Erstad would be the answer to any questions about the quality of Nebraska's place-kicking and punting. The likelihood that the 1995 Cornhuskers will be without him poses two very significant questions: (1) Who will do Nebraska's place-kicking? (2) Who will handle the Cornhusker punting?

Those questions might not be answered during the spring, although walk-ons Ted Retzlaff and Jesse Kosch, the son of former Cornhusker Bill Kosch, will do their best in that capacity.

Nebraska's scholarship recruiting class might provide some answers, too, in the persons of incoming freshmen Andy Bilanzich from Salt Lake City, Utah, and Kris Brown from Southlake, Texas. Bilanzich is pri-

marily a punter, and Brown is primarily a place-kicker.

• **How will assistant head coach Frank Solich keep all of his I-backs happy?**

Nebraska has had some outstanding running back combinations, among them Mike Rozier and Roger Craig and, more recently, Derek Brown and Calvin Jones. But next season's group of I-backs could be as good as any the Cornhuskers have had.

Lawrence Phillips is at the top of the list, of course. He gained more yards (1,722) last season than any ball carrier in Cornhusker history except Rozier, who set the school single-season record at 2,148 in 1983, the year he won the Heisman Trophy.

But Damon Benning, Clinton Childs and Brian Knuckles, who's joining the competition after redshirting last season, aren't exactly chopped liver, and come the fall, the line behind Phillips will include Ahman Green, as well. Green, an incoming freshman from Omaha (Central) Neb., was rated among the top five prep running backs in the country last season.

• **Is there life (in the form of another NCAA rushing title) after the departure of Zach Wiegert, Brenden Stai, Joel Wilks, Rob Zatechka and top sub Bill Humphrey?**

Putting together an offensive line around center Aaron Graham, the lone returning starter, will be a priority in the spring. Even if offensive line coach Milt Tenopir can find players who approximate the size and strength of last year's group, the line obviously won't have the experience. But Nebraska has a rich tradition of developing offensive linemen, as Outland Trophy winners Dave Rimington (twice), Dean Steinkuhler, Will Shields and last year's winner, Wiegert, can attest.

One thing is certain, however. The Cornhuskers' offensive line in 1995 won't get the national publicity that the Wiegert-Stai bunch did.

• **Will the Peter brothers, Christian and Jason, be lining up alongside each other on defense?**

Christian Peter, the nose tackle, should emerge as one of the premier defensive linemen in the Big Eight, if not the country, in 1995. Spring practice will provide him an opportunity to sharpen his skills in preparation for his senior season.

Jason Peter, a sophomore, will begin the spring at the top of the depth chart at the other tackle position. They're a potentially rugged tandem, as their "Peterbilt" tattoos suggest. ■



If Darin Erstad (above) opts to play professional baseball over football, filling the punting duties may prove to be easy compared to filling the void left by Rob Zatechka and last year's talented offensive line.



Berringer came in and got Nebraska on the scoreboard with a second-quarter touchdown pass to tight end Mark Gilman. Then Frazier returned to direct the Cornhuskers' fourth-quarter rally.

"I was probably the freshest player out there (at the end)," said Frazier. However, what worked against the Hurricanes on New Year's night probably wouldn't work for an entire season, according to both Frazier and Berringer. "I'd think you would name a starter," said Berringer, who started seven games last season after Frazier was sidelined by a blood clot problem.

"But for Coach (Tom) Osborne, it's been proven he won't be afraid to play two guys. He can't lose either way."

Frazier's record is 21-3 as a starter, with two of those losses coming in Orange Bowl games. "I can't see a whole season of sharing the No. 1 spot, where either of us would be happy," he said. He compared the situation to the one that existed at I-back three years ago, when Derek Brown and Calvin Jones both played the position.

"One needs to be a starter. One needs to be the backup," said Frazier. "We won that one game (the Orange Bowl) because we were able to throw two different types of quarterbacks at Miami. Brook did things when he went in that set them off-balance. But I don't think we could have done that for the whole season."

Although their competition for the starting job is spirited, Frazier and Berringer don't seem to have

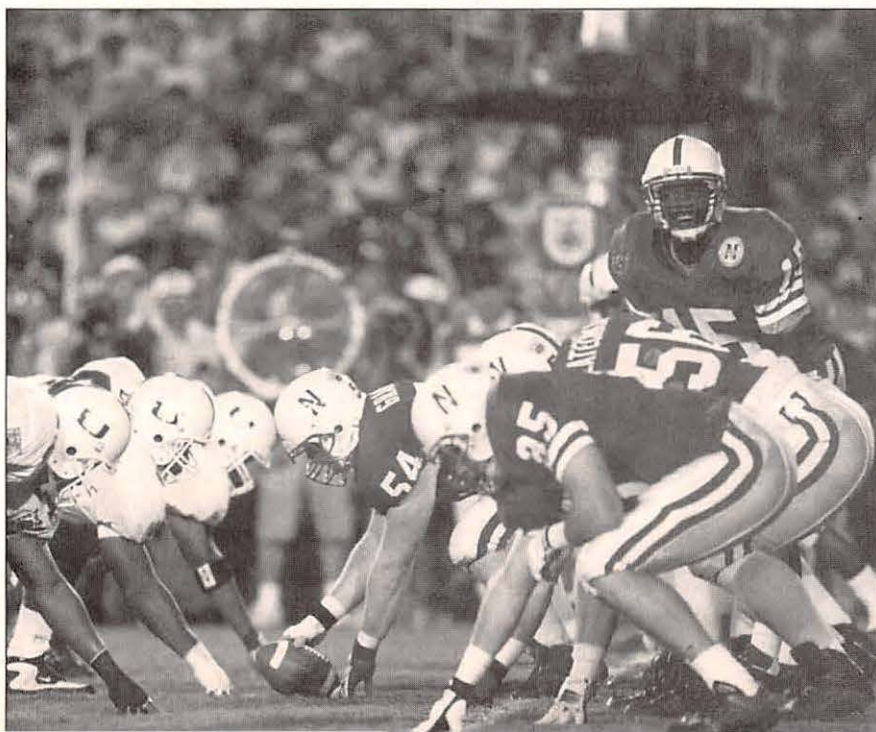
any animosity toward each other. Their relationship on the field is supportive. "We try to help each other the best we can," Frazier said. Off the field, "we don't see each other much."

Nebraska's ability to succeed despite the unexpected change in quarterbacks depended not only on the quarterbacks themselves but also on the players around them. After Frazier was sidelined, "the team stayed focused," Berringer said. "The quarterback situation didn't seem to bother the team at all. It would have been easy for guys to have some doubt after Tommie got hurt, (to wonder) 'Who's this guy in there (at quarterback) now?' But there was none of that all season."

That his teammates showed such confidence in him gave Berringer confidence in himself. "Sometimes when a guy comes from a small high school, confidence is a factor," said Berringer, who played for a 5-4 football team in Goodland, Kan., as a high school senior. "I didn't have confidence."

"It wasn't Tommie's fault that he got hurt, and it wasn't my fault that I played well. I had a chance to start in seven games, and I played well enough. Tommie came back, won the starting job back, and together, with the whole team, we won the national championship," Berringer

Nebraska's success with interchanging Brook Berringer and Tommie Frazier (below) in the Orange Bowl may not have occurred if the rotation had been used all year.



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said.

Frazier's problem wasn't confidence. It was remaining optimistic after being told that the remainder of his junior season was in jeopardy because of the blood clot problems. Watching from the sideline was the lowest point in his athletic career, he said. "I didn't come to practice for two or three weeks. I didn't show my face around here. I didn't want to be in a place where I couldn't participate."

His personal low point was followed by the high point of winning the Orange Bowl game and the national championship that went with it. "Everything I've done through football, everything that happened to me last season, nothing was more exciting than winning the Orange Bowl," he said.

Another difference this spring will be that the quarterbacks probably won't wear the green practice jerseys used to identify offensive players who shouldn't be hit by the defense.

"We'll probably take some hits this spring," Frazier said. "I don't think I've ever been hit in the spring because we've had a shortage of quarterbacks and they (the coaches) had us wearing the green jerseys."

By the end of April, "after spring practice, the (quarterback) controversy will be over," said Frazier.

Although he has never enjoyed spring practice, Frazier said, "I don't dread it."

Frazier feels a little like he did when he was a Cornhusker freshman. "I have to come out and prove myself again," he said.

Even so, neither he nor Berringer is complaining about the situation.

Quite the contrary. "I like pressure," Frazier said. "I like competition, when someone is breathing down your neck."

Ditto for Berringer.

The Frazier-Berringer quarterback controversy represents a positive in evaluating Nebraska's chances of repeating last season's success. The Cornhuskers will begin preparing in the spring to make a run at a fifth consecutive Big Eight championship, and a second consecutive national title.

"I feel we're not going to settle for less than we had last year," said Frazier.

That attitude was apparent long before thoughts turned to spring



practice. "We've got more guys working in the weight room than we did last year," Frazier said less than a month after second semester classes began. "We have a chance to repeat."

As last season illustrated, even two quality quarterbacks might not be enough in an option offense. Though he might have been forgotten in the excitement of the Orange Bowl, junior Matt Turman gained significant experience last season, including a start against Kansas State. He and Monte Christo, who was pulled out of a redshirt season because of injuries, will join in the spring competition.

Rebuilding the offensive line will be a focus in the spring. Senior center Aaron Graham is the only returning starter from an interior line regarded as one of the best in Cornhusker history. Chris Dishman, a junior, and Eric Anderson, a sophomore, will begin the spring at the top of the depth chart at the tackles, with Aaron Taylor, also a sophomore, and Steve Ott, a senior, as the first-team guards. The 6-foot-4, 275-pound Ott was the seventh lineman a year ago, before suffering a broken left foot seven games into the schedule. He's the most experienced of the linemen after Graham, having backed up both Brenden Stai and Joel Wilks before the injury.

Regardless of which players emerge, the offensive line will be relatively young. In addition to Graham and Ott, the only other senior lineman of note going into the spring is senior Steve Volin. The other offensive linemen who will get a good look in the spring include

Having quality I-backs like Heisman Trophy candidate Lawrence Phillips will help take the pressure off an offensive line that returns only one starter.

juniors Adam Treu, Matt Vrzal and Kory Mikos; sophomores Jon Zatechka, Fred Pollack and Josh Heskew, and redshirted freshman Brandt Wade.

Assembling a first-team line isn't a significant concern, according to veteran offensive line coach Milt Tenopir. The key will be developing sufficient depth.

Junior I-back Lawrence Phillips will help in the development of the offensive line, according to Frazier. He "takes the pressure off everybody, including the young linemen," Frazier said. "If they miss a block, they know Lawrence still might break a play."

Running backs coach Frank Solich can concentrate on evaluating full-backs in the spring while Phillips, a certain Heisman Trophy candidate, and the other I-backs sharpen their skills. Junior Brian Knuckles, who redshirted last season after transferring from Coffeyville, Kan., Junior College, will join senior Clinton Childs and junior Damon Benning in competition for the top back-up job.

Knuckles broke Mike Rozier's career rushing record at Coffeyville. His ability is such that Childs and Benning can't afford to relax, although there's no reason to think they would, anyway. Under different circumstances, any of the three could be the starter in Nebraska's option offense. They'll all be joined by freshman Ahman Green in the

fall. Green's talent is such that he might not sit out a redshirt season, meaning the Cornhuskers will be loaded at I-back in 1995.

Lining up fullbacks will be a priority in the spring. Senior Jeff Makovicka is the leading candidate to replace Cory Schlesinger as the starter, but after Makovicka, the field is open to a group of walk-ons that includes senior Chris Norris, junior Brian Schuster, sophomore Todd Uhler and redshirted freshman Joel Makovicka (Jeff's brother) and Billy Legate. Uhler and Legate are moving from I-back.

Receivers coach Ron Brown will be busiest evaluating tight ends, a position at which only Gilman returns with experience. Gilman, who will be a senior, is a versatile, multi-purpose tight end. "You could put him in about any situation and feel comfortable," Brown said.

Nebraska's offense requires at least three tight ends, however, which means there is plenty of opportunity for a group of young scholarship players, among them sophomore Tim Carpenter and redshirted freshmen Sheldon Jackson and Dorrick Roy. The 6-foot-2, 225-pound Carpenter is a converted fullback who has "excellent blocking explosion," according to Brown. Plus, "he's quicker on the field than he times," Brown said.

The situation at tight end is similar to that of a year ago, when Brown had to find replacements for Gerald Armstrong and Trumane Bell and came up with Matt Shaw, a tenacious blocker, and Eric Alford, a downfield receiving threat.

"We've got some patchwork to do," said Brown. "No question about it."

That's hardly the case at split end, where everyone returns. Senior Reggie Baul and junior Brendan Holbein, who alternated last season, will be joined by senior John Livingston and redshirted freshmen Kenny Cheatham and Jeff Lake. Cheatham and Lake don't fit the "itty-bitty committee" mold of the Cornhuskers' recent wide receivers. They're lanky, but with sprinter's speed.

Because of the experience and potential depth at split end, junior Riley Washington will move to wingback in order to "balance the speed," Brown said. Washington, who has world-class sprinter's speed, will join steady Clester Johnson, a strong blocker, and junior Jon Vedral there.

The loss of Abdul Muhammad was "big," said Brown. But Washington "can give us a lot at that position if we can find a way to get him the ball. He's not just a track runner. He can change directions. He does fluid things receivers do. He's so blazing fast, and he's a tenacious worker."

In last year's spring game, Washington caught four passes for 90 yards and two touchdowns.

Are the Cornhuskers really getting faster?

Because of Osborne's commitment to an option offense, which places considerable blocking demands on receivers, Nebraska has had to be extra persuasive in recruiting players for those positions. In the past, "we wanted to get speed (at wide receiver) and were ready to sacrifice receiving experience

in high school to get it."

Former Cornhusker wingback Cory Dixon was a running back in high school, as was Washington.

Cheatham represents something of a breakthrough in that he has exceptional speed and played wide receiver in high school. It will be interesting to see how quickly he develops during the spring. In any case, the emphasis on speed is paying off.

"We can frighten a lot of people with our speed," Brown said. And the Cornhusker receivers haven't sacrificed their ability to block.

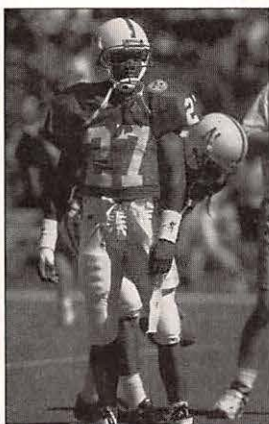
Junior split end Brendan Holbein is one of the best blocking wide receivers in the country, according to Brown.

Among the defensive priorities in the spring are developing depth and sorting out some strongside and weakside linebacker, and a tackle or two.

Craig Bohl, who replaced Kevin Steele as inside linebackers coach, won't have time to ease into his new job, what with weakside linebacker Ed Stewart gone. Seniors Phil Ellis and Doug Colman alternated in the middle, and junior Jon Hesse is "just about there" as a backup, according to defensive coordinator Charlie McBride.

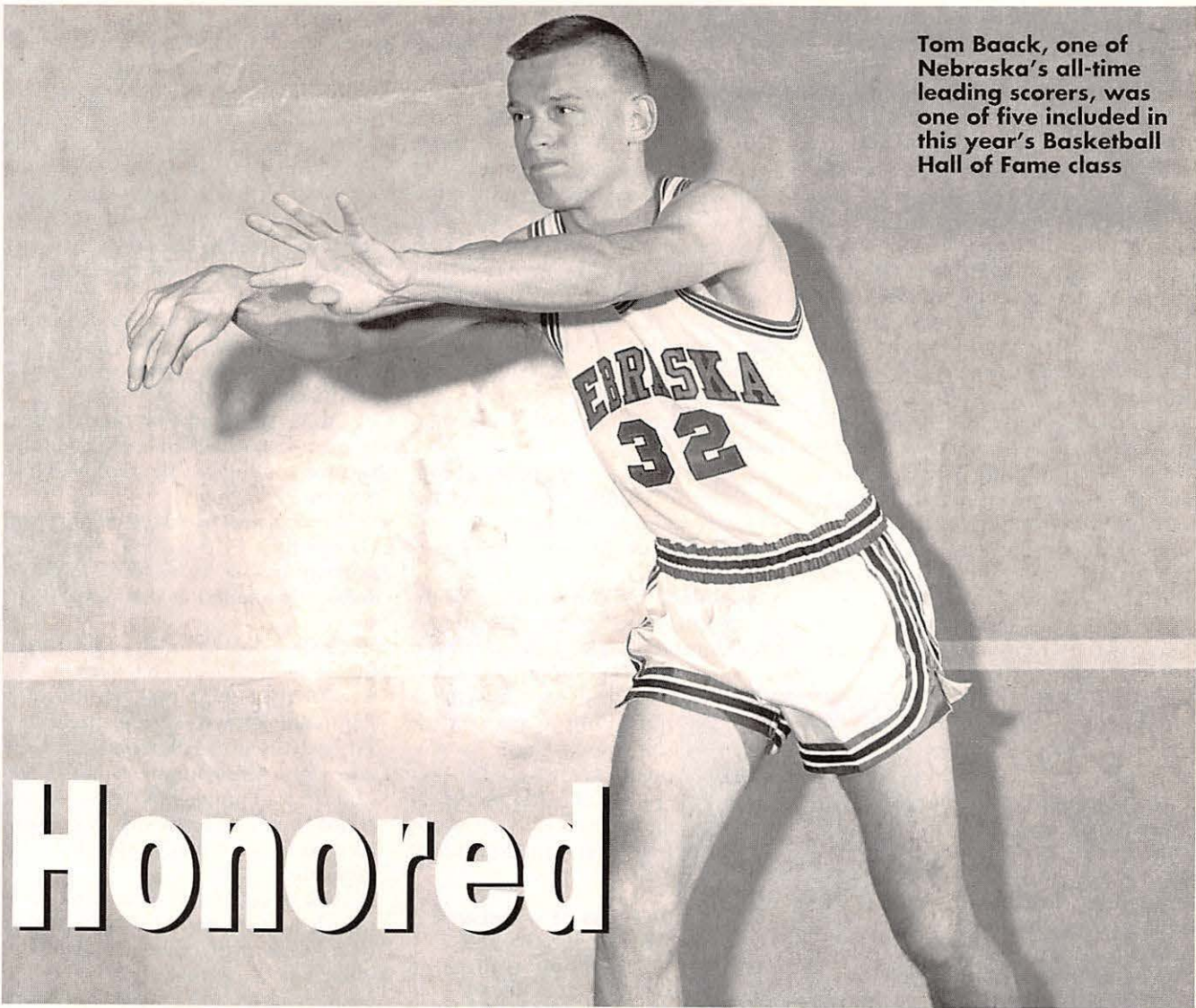
Any of several players could step up alongside those three. Junior Ryan Terwilliger, Stewart's backup, will begin the spring at the top of the depth chart on the weakside, with

See PREVIEW page 30



The loss of wingback Abdul Muhammad (left) will put more pressure on Riley Washington (below), a converted split end.





Tom Baack, one of Nebraska's all-time leading scorers, was one of five included in this year's Basketball Hall of Fame class

Honored

Carl Olson, Charles Black, Don Fitz, Albert Maxey and Tom Baack Inducted into Nebraska Hoop Hall of Fame

Carl Olson is 89 years old. "I'm one of the survivors," he said at a reception in late February honoring this year's inductees into the Nebraska Basketball Hall of Fame.

Olson was among five inductees, including four players. It is believed he is the oldest living Cornhusker basketball player.

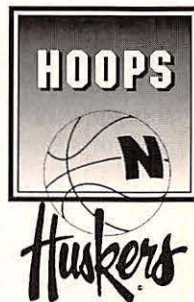
"The choices are pretty limited," said Olson, who earned varsity letters on teams coached by Charles Black in 1928 and 1929.

This year's other inductees were Don Fitz, a three-year letterman from 1939 through 1941; Albert Maxey, who lettered in 1959 and 1960; and Tom Baack, who earned letters in 1966, 1967 and 1968. Jerry Lott, the operational superintendent at the Devaney Sports Center from the time it opened in 1976 until March 1994, received the Hall of Fame's special merit award.

Olson played in Grant Hall, the location of the university's first basketball court, as a Nebraska freshman in 1925-26. He had already played basketball for three seasons at Gustavus Adolphus in St. Peter, Minn. "I played seven years (of college basketball), some sort of a record," said Olson. "But it was legitimate, I guess."

He started college at age 16, which was too young for admission into Nebraska's engineering school. He visited Gustavus Adolphus on the return to Lincoln, Neb., from a fishing trip and was attracted to the school because of a newly constructed gymnasium.

After three years at Gustavus Adolphus, he transferred to Nebraska, figuring he would have



one season of varsity athletic competition remaining. He played one season on the freshman basketball team, then spent a season on the varsity, mostly on the bench.

"I thought I was through," said Olson. He wasn't, however.

Black concluded that Olson's freshman year at Gustavus Adolphus shouldn't count against his eligibility. Because the school was small, he said, his second and third years there should be the equivalent of one at Nebraska.

"So I played another year," said Olson, earning his first letter. Again "I thought I was through."

But again, Black called Olson into his office. "He told me they had it worked out so that I could play another season. 'You have another year in engineering school, don't you?' I didn't ask questions," Olson said.

By the end of that seventh season, he said, he was back on the bench, watching others play.

"My senior year, we had a different starting lineup about every game," said Olson. At the end, Black "decided he was going to play all juniors and sophomores. That put four of us (seniors) who had been playing on the bench." Among the sophomores was Don Maclay, who would earn All-America recognition as a senior in 1931.

"That was a good team," Olson said. It finished 11-5.

After explaining his seven-season collegiate career at the Hall of Fame reception, Olson turned to Danny Nee. "The statute has run out after 60 to 65 years," Olson said. "You don't have to worry about that, Danny."

Fitz said he was one of the first one-handed shooters at Nebraska, following close on the heels of Stanford's Angelo "Hank" Luisetti, who was credited with popularizing the one-handed jump shot in the mid-1930s.

Fitz played for W.H. Browne and A.J. Lewandowski, a Browne assistant promoted to head coach when Browne went into military service Fitz's senior season.

Often, Browne would encourage him to shoot free throws two-handed, Fitz said. "Sometimes I would, just to satisfy him. But I thought it was easier to shoot with one hand."

Fitz earned first-team All-Big Six honors in 1941.

Maxey was recruited by Jerry Bush out of Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis. Among his

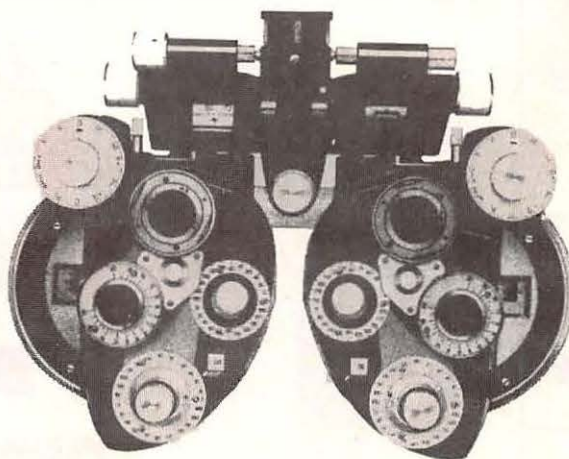


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teammates there was Oscar Robertson. Maxey ranks 42nd on Nebraska's career scoring list, despite playing only two seasons. He amassed 677 points and averaged more than seven rebounds per game.

Maxey, who served 32 years on the Lincoln police force, offered special thanks to the late Bush and his assistant, Tony Sharpe, both of whom have been honored by the Hall of Fame.

Baack finished his career as Nebraska's all-time scoring leader with 1,299 points, a record that lasted for 10 years. His career scoring average of 17.3 points per game ranks third on Nebraska's all-time list, behind those of Dave Hoppen and Jerry Fort.

Baack also spent eight seasons as a Cornhusker assistant coach. He played for three winning teams, all under Joe Cipriano. Nebraska was 20-5 his sophomore year, a team ranked among the best in school history.

"Playing in the Coliseum, we'd press full-court," said Baack.

A student would beat a drum and

when the press was on, the beat would pick up. "The referee would start counting faster," Baack said.

"We got a lot of 10-second calls after 7 or 8 seconds. But leave it to the Big Eight to mess it up. They outlawed the drums the next year."

The Nebraska Basketball Hall of Fame has inducted 32 players and

coaches and presented eight others with the special merit award in its seven years of existence. When Nee was hired as head coach, "we really felt it was important to get a tradition going," he said. "I was shocked there wasn't a Hall of Fame here."

"We've slowly gotten the thing turned around," he said. ■

PREVIOUS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 1994

Bob Cerv (1947-50), Tom Russell (1961-62), Nate Branch (1965-67), Andre Smith (1978-81)

Class of 1993

Bob Pierce (1949-51), Grant Simmons (1964-66), Jack Moore (1979-82)

Class of 1992

Sid Held (1940-42), Rex Ekwall (1955-57), Marvin Stewart (1969-71), Coach W.H. Browne (1933-40)

Class of 1991

Leroy Chalk (1969-71), Jerry Fort

(1973-76), Coach Jerry Bush (1955-63)

Class of 1990

Herschell Turner (1958-60), Milton 'Bus' Whitehead (1948-50), Coach Joe Cipriano (1964-80)

Class of 1989

James Buchanan (1950-52), Sam Carrier (1911-13), Steve Hokuf (1930-32), Chuck Jura (1970-72), Stuart Lantz (1966-68), Don MacLay (1929-31), Robert Parsons (1936-38), Claude Retherford (1947-49), Mathias 'Mutt' Volz (1923-25), George Wahlquist (1933-36), Coach Harry Good (1947-54)



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IOWA STATE VS. NEBRASKA

Iowa State 79, Nebraska 77

March 5, 1995 • Lincoln, Neb.

The game represented the Cornhuskers' season in miniature. They led most of the way against Iowa State at the Devaney Sports Center, only to watch in frustration as the Cyclones' Fred Hoiberg scored 12 consecutive Iowa State points in the closing minutes to set the stage for the victory.

Julius Michalik, who was scoreless for the first 30-plus minutes of the game, produced the winning shot, hitting an open baseline jumper with 3 seconds showing on the clock.

An off-balance, desperation three-point jump shot by Melvin Brooks sailed over the basket at the buzzer as Nebraska finished 2-5 in Big Eight play at home. Brooks, the Cornhuskers' lone senior, was 4-of-4 on three-point shots until that final miss.

"I thought Nebraska did everything possible it could do," an obviously frustrated Cornhusker Coach Danny Nee said afterward.

"We weren't able to find a way to win it. I thought we did a good job today. We played together. We played hard. We played both ends of the floor. We just couldn't kick it over."

Hoiberg, the grandson of former Nebraska Coach Jerry Bush, scored 26 points. The Cornhuskers' biggest defensive problem, however, was Loren Meyer. The 6-foot-10 senior center had 31 points and 15 rebounds.

NEBRASKA vs Iowa State

Name	Min.	Fg.-Att.	3pt.-Att.	Ft.-Att.	Rb.	Bk.	A.	\$	Tp.
Badgett, T.	25	2-4	0-0	1-4	1	0	2	1	5
Brooks, M.	27	5-8	4-5	2-2	4	0	0	0	16
Moore, M.	24	1-7	0-0	2-2	6	1	0	2	4
Strickland, E.	35	10-17	2-6	0-0	8	0	7	3	22
Boone, J.	36	6-15	2-6	5-6	2	0	3	0	19
Wald, T.	31	1-3	0-1	0-0	3	0	8	1	2
Sallee, C.	15	3-6	0-0	0-0	2	1	1	0	6
Glock, J.	7	1-2	1-2	0-0	2	0	0	1	3

Team Totals

Nebraska	200	29-62	9-20	10-14	30	2	21	8	77
Iowa State	200	27-54	5-15	20-21	34	0	15	4	79

NEBRASKA VS. KANSAS STATE

Kansas State 75, Nebraska 73

March 1, 1995 • Manhattan, Kan.

The Cornhuskers' fading hopes of positioning themselves for a potential at-large bid into the NCAA Tournament field were effectively eliminated in front of an audience of 5,999 at Bramlage Coliseum in Manhattan, Kan.

Nebraska led by eight points midway through the second half but couldn't hold on against an onslaught paced by Wildcat senior Belvis Noland, who came into the game averaging 11.6 points. The 6-4 Noland scored 31 points, including 20 in the first half.

The Cornhuskers' Jaron Boone nearly matched Noland point for point, scoring 16 in the first half and finishing with 26.

Boone, 8-of-13 from the field including 6-of-9 from three-point range, "played outstanding," according to Nee.

Boone didn't score a field goal in the second half until more than 15 minutes had elapsed.

Noland also was 6-of-9 on three-point shots, as the cellar-dwelling Wildcats won for only the third time in the conference. Kansas State took the lead for good with two minutes left.

NEBRASKA vs Kansas State

Name	Min.	Fg.-Att.	3pt.-Att.	Ft.-Att.	Rb.	Bk.	A.	\$	Tp.
Badgett, T.	20:44	2-5	0-0	0-0	4	0	1	2	4
Brooks, M.	18:18	1-3	0-0	0-0	3	0	2	0	2
Moore, M.	33:23	3-7	0-0	4-8	9	1	3	0	10
Strickland, E.	35:20	6-15	3-8	0-0	4	0	3	0	15
Boone, J.	35:01	8-13	6-9	4-4	2	0	3	0	26
Sallee, C.	19:08	2-3	0-0	2-3	7	1	0	0	6
Wald, T.	25:29	3-7	1-4	0-0	2	0	5	0	7
Surles, C.	12:37	1-3	1-1	0-0	0	0	1	0	3

Team Totals

Nebraska	200	26-56	11-22	10-15	32	2	18	2	73
Kansas State	200	27-57	9-16	12-21	32	1	14	9	75

COLORADO VS. NEBRASKA

Colorado 80, Nebraska 74

February 25, 1995 • Lincoln, Neb.

Danny Nee's frustration level was "pretty high" after a shocking loss against the Buffaloes. Colorado came to the Bob Devaney Sports Center having lost 84 of its previous 85 Big Eight Conference road games.

The Buffaloes had suffered 28 consecutive conference road losses and had fallen to Nebraska at home, 100-86. They hadn't won in Lincoln since 1981.

The key to Colorado's success this time was senior Donnie Boyce, who became the Buffaloes' career scoring leader with a 28-point effort.

He hit 3-of-4 free throws in the final 38 seconds to frustrate Nebraska's attempts to rally.

"We didn't play well. I can't tell you why," said Nee. "I guess that's the kind of team we have."

"I think it shows we're not there. We can't put a good, consistent performance together. I felt we were turning the corner."

Colorado freshman Ted Kritza scored a career-high 15 points. "I never thought we would end the streak today," he said. "When I was a little kid watching Colorado, it was always: 'Lost on the road, lost on the road.'"

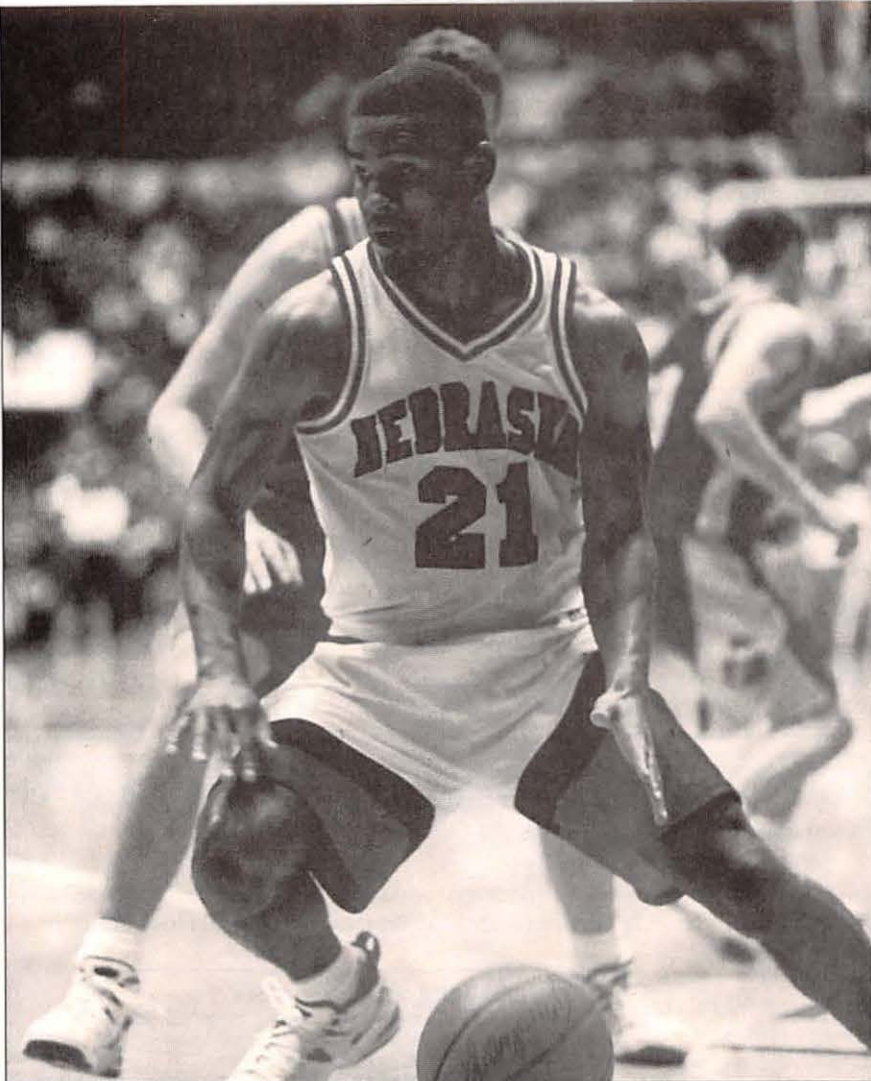
The loss was the Cornhuskers' fourth at home in six Big Eight games. They led only once, at 20-18.

NEBRASKA vs Colorado

Name	Min.	Fg.-Att.	3pt.-Att.	Ft.-Att.	Rb.	Bk.	A.	\$	Tp.
Badgett, T.	33	4-9	0-0	2-5	6	2	2	2	10
Brooks, M.	5	0-2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Moore, M.	31	6-11	0-0	6-8	9	1	1	0	18
Strickland, E.	29	5-13	2-7	4-6	6	0	4	2	16
Boone, J.	35	7-16	3-8	2-3	4	0	6	1	19
Surles, C.	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	2	0	0	0	0
Wald, T.	27	1-7	0-2	0-0	2	0	3	2	2
Sallee, C.	19	2-4	0-0	3-4	8	0	0	0	7
Glock, J.	14	1-6	0-2	0-0	0	0	4	1	2

Team Totals

Nebraska	200	26-68	5-19	17-26	39	3	20	8	74
Colorado	200	30-61	4-13	16-24	48	3	21	5	80



NIT- BOUND

No strangers to the NIT tourney, Nebraska again accepts bid after NCAA passes on 17-13 squad

An obviously frustrated and disappointed Erick Strickland spoke with reporters following the Nebraska basketball team's 79-77 loss against Iowa State at the Devaney Sports Center to finish the regular season. He was subdued, because of the loss but also because of the unfulfilled expectations of the season.

The Cornhuskers finished 17-12, and worse, seventh in the Big Eight. "We need something positive to happen right now," Strickland said prior to the Big Eight Tournament. Hopes of a fifth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance had faded.

"I'd like to go there, do well there," said Strickland.

But, he said, "It would be stupid to go there and not be ready."

Perhaps, Nebraska would be better off playing in the National Invitation Tournament, Strickland admitted, adding that success in the NIT could be a springboard for next season. When this issue of *Huskies Illustrated* went to press, Nebraska was preparing for that possibility.

The Cornhuskers were playing in the NIT, the oldest of college basketball's post-season tournaments, for the ninth time, including three in a row from 1983 through 1985. They had reached the semifinals at world-famous Madison Square Garden in New York City twice, including Danny Nee's first season as head coach.

The NIT preceded by one year what is now the NCAA Tournament,



Finishing at 17-12, Erick Strickland (top) and teammates will try to duplicate the feat Kerry Kittles (bottom) and Villanova pulled off last year, winning the NIT tournament after being snubbed by the NCAA Tournament selection committee.

beginning in 1938. It wasn't until the early 1950s that the NCAA Tournament finally surpassed the NIT in popularity and prestige. During the late 1940s, the NCAA Tournament was held after the NIT in order to avoid a conflict that would have hurt it.

In 1950, City College of New York became the only school to win both tournaments at the end of the same season. Coach Nat Holman's CCNY team defeated Bradley in the championship games of both tournaments.

The NIT, established by the Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association, is now administered by the Metropolitan Intercollegiate Basketball Association, comprised of New York City-area schools Fordham, Wagner, Manhattan, St. John's and New York University. In

the early years, the tournament was played at old Madison Square Garden, located between 49th and 50th streets in Manhattan. In 1968, it followed the new Madison Square Garden to 33rd Street. During those years, all of the tournament games were played at the Garden. In 1977, the tournament was restructured, with the early rounds played primarily at campus sites. Only four teams travel to New York City for the semifinals and finals now.

Six teams played in the first NIT, which was won by Long Island University. The field was increased to eight in 1941, 12 in 1949, 14 in 1965, 16 in 1968, 24 in 1979 and 32 — the current number — in 1980. Entrants are chosen from those that don't make the NCAA Tournament's field of 64, giving the NIT its second-chance appeal. The teams

and matchups are announced immediately following the NCAA Tournament's nationally televised selection program.

Last season, Villanova, which struggled during the Big East season, won the NIT championship. Building on that success, the Wildcats returned to the NCAA Tournament this season.

Unlike the NCAA Tournament, the NIT doesn't establish brackets, instead assigning matchups and sites on a game-to-game basis leading up to the semifinals. That increases the NIT's chances of turning a profit and allows NIT officials to influence, as much as possible, which teams get to New York.

Season-low shooting percentage Dooms Huskers in Big Eight Tourney

For the 13 minutes or so of its first-round game in the Big Eight Tournament at Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo., the Nebraska basketball team played like the defending champion instead of the No. 7 seed.

The Cornhuskers got off to a fast start against sluggish Oklahoma State, the No. 2 seed. Nebraska, which led 17-6, still held a 24-17 advantage just under 13 minutes into the game. That's when the 19th-ranked Cowboys went on a 22-0 run, after which they never looked back.

"I felt the shots that went in early were low-percentage shots," said Cornhusker Coach Danny Nee. "I didn't think they'd continue going in."

He was right. Nebraska shot a season-low 27.8 percent from the field against Oklahoma State's physical defense, while the Cowboys, once focused, hit 43.5 percent.

The Cornhuskers played reasonably well defensively against Oklahoma State's inside-outside threat of Bryant Reeves and Randy Rutherford. Reeves finished with 13 points and nine rebounds. Rutherford scored 20 points, but made only 8-of-18 field goal attempts, and had eight rebounds.

Nebraska had no defensive remedy for the problems caused by the hustle of the Cowboys' Scott Pierce, however. Pierce contributed 14 points and 10 rebounds to Oklahoma State's third win against the Cornhuskers.

Erick Strickland and Jaron Boone combined for 28 points to lead Nebraska, which left Kansas City with a 17-13 record and seven losses in its final eight games. Oklahoma State went on to win the tournament title.

"When we're playing a Top 25 team, I see a physical dominance," Nee said afterward. As a result, "we can't do the things we want to do."

Among those things was earning a fifth consecutive bid into the NCAA Tournament. Instead, Nee's team had to be content with playing in the National Invitation Tournament.

The Cornhuskers accepted an invitation from the NIT on the Sunday night after the NCAA Tournament field was announced. Nebraska was matched against Georgia in the first round of the NIT, at the Devaney Sports Center. ■



Danny Nee's team will be playing in its first NIT Tourney since 1989.

1994-95 HOOPS

RECORD: 17-13

Nov. 25	NE Louisiana	W, 99-77
Nov. 26	Virginia Tech	L, 87-81
Nov. 27	College of Charleston	W, 74-72
Dec. 2	Morehead State	W, 96-55
Dec. 3	Idaho State	W, 98-72
Dec. 7	Creighton	W, 85-57
Dec. 10	Michigan State	W, 96-91
Dec. 17	Western Illinois	W, 69-62
Dec. 21	NE Illinois	W, 101-60
Dec. 22	@Northern Iowa	W, 95-88
Dec. 29	Delaware State	W, 94-52
Dec. 31	Appalachian State	W, 108-71
Jan. 4	@Texas	L, 102-74
Jan. 7	Missouri	L, 82-74
Jan. 9	@Long Beach State	W, 82-71
Jan. 12	Kansas State	W, 78-56
Jan. 18	@Missouri-Kan. City	W, 63-60
Jan. 23	@Kansas	L, 84-67
Jan. 28	@Oklahoma	L, 82-72
Feb. 1	Oklahoma State	L, 82-65
Feb. 5	Oklahoma	W, 71-59
Feb. 8	@Colorado	W, 100-86
Feb. 11	@Iowa State	L, 72-69
Feb. 14	Kansas	L, 91-68
Feb. 18	@Oklahoma State	L, 93-53
Feb. 22	@Missouri	W, 78-72
Feb. 25	Colorado	L, 80-74
Mar. 1	@Kansas State	L, 75-73
Mar. 5	Iowa State	L, 79-77
Big Eight Tournament		
Mar. 9	Oklahoma State	L, 68-48

NEBRASKA'S HISTORY IN THE NIT

1967

Coach Joe Cipriano's Cornhuskers finished the regular season with a 16-8 record and tied for second in the Big Eight with Colorado. They were 10-4 in conference play. Big Eight champion Kansas advanced to the NCAA Tournament, losing to Houston and Elvin Hayes in the regional semifinals, 59-58.

Nebraska's first appearance in the NIT was forgettable. The Cornhuskers were one of two teams in the field of 14 given a first-round bye. Duke was the other. Both were upset in their first game, with Duke losing against Southern Illinois, 72-63, and Nebraska falling to Marshall, 119-88. Marshall's George Stone scored 46 points in the game.

Led by guard Walt Frazier and coached by Jack Hartman, "Cinderella" Southern Illinois won the tournament, defeating Marquette, 71-56.

1978

Cipriano's team finished 20-6 in the regular season and second in the Big Eight. The Cornhuskers reached the semifinals of the conference post-season tournament, losing to Missouri, 61-58, in Kansas City. Nebraska was the only Big Eight team to beat champion Kansas, upsetting the Jayhawks, ranked No. 8 at the time, 62-58, at the Devaney Sports Center.

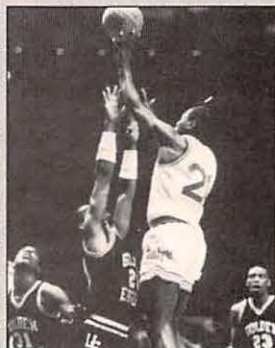
The NIT had changed its format the previous year, in an attempt to generate more interest, and revenue, scheduling early-round games at campus and non-Madison Square Garden sites. There were still 16 teams, however.

The Cornhuskers played their first game at the Devaney Sports Center, defeating Utah State, 67-66. Then they had to go on the road, to Austin, Texas, where Texas unceremoniously ended their season, 67-48. The Longhorns advanced to New York City with that victory, defeating Rutgers even more handily in the semifinals, 96-76, and then taking their first and only NIT championship by defeating North Carolina State, 101-93.

1980

With Cipriano ailing after being diagnosed with cancer, Moe Iba stepped up and earned the Associated Press award as Big Eight Coach of the Year. The Andre Smith-led Cornhuskers took an 18-12 record into the NIT after losing against Kansas State, 60-59, in the semifinals of the conference post-season tournament. They finished in a second-place tie during the Big Eight regular season.

Nebraska's record at home was 14-2, but the NIT sent the Cornhuskers to Ann Arbor, Mich., to play Michigan and Omaha's Mike McGee in the first round of the 32-team tournament. The Wolverines won, 76-69, and survived another round before losing at Virginia, 79-68. The Cavaliers then defeated UNLV in the semifinals and won the title with a 58-55 victory against Minnesota.



Forward Derrick Vick earned All-NIT team honors, but Nebraska fared worse in 1987.

1983

The first of three consecutive NIT appearances under Iba was the most successful. The Cornhuskers won three home games to advance to the semifinals at Madison Square Garden. They opened with a 72-65 victory against Tulane, defeated Iona, 85-73, and Texas Christian, 67-57. The run was ended by DePaul, 68-58. The Blue Demons then lost against Fresno State in the championship game, 69-60. There was no third-place game.



Stan Cloudy and the 1983 team advanced to the semifinals.

1984

The NIT sent the Cornhuskers on the road, first for a rematch against Creighton in Omaha. Nebraska had won the first game between the teams at the Sports Center in December, 65-56. The Cornhuskers won the NIT game, 56-54. They were rewarded with a second road game, against Xavier at the famed Cincinnati Gardens. Xavier edged them, 58-57.

Xavier suffered the same fate in the next round, losing at Michigan, 63-62.

1985

Nebraska got a chance to salvage something from a mediocre regular season. The Cornhuskers finished 15-12 and tied for fifth place in the Big Eight during the regular season. After losing to Kansas, 74-69, in the first round of the Big Eight Tournament, Nebraska was given a home game in the NIT against Canisius. The Cornhuskers won, 79-66, then went to Los Angeles, where they played UCLA in historic Pauley Pavilion.

Coach Walt Hazzard's Bruins, paced by Reggie Miller, eliminated Nebraska, 82-63, on the way to winning the tournament.

1987

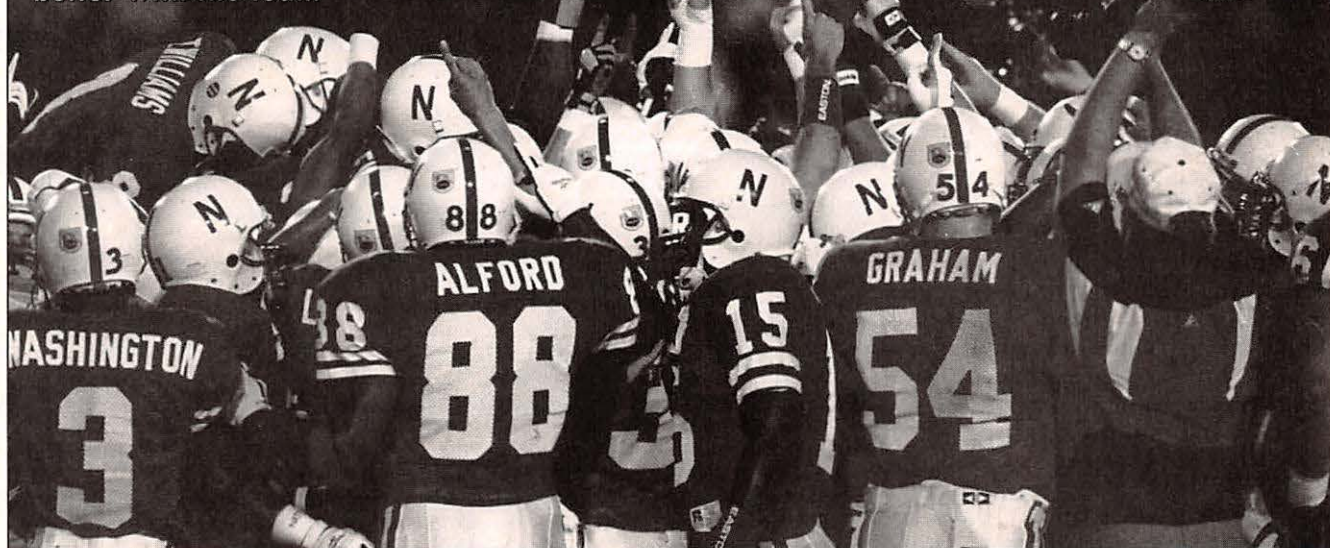
Danny Nee's first Nebraska team finished the regular season with a 17-8 record. The Cornhuskers were fifth in the Big Eight, at 7-7. After losing to Kansas State in the first round of the conference tournament, 47-45, Nebraska was invited to the NIT. The Cornhuskers won three close home games: Marquette, 78-76; Arkansas, 78-71; and Washington, 81-76. They lost to Southern Mississippi, however, in New York City, then rebounded to defeat Arkansas-Little Rock, 76-67, in the third-place game.

1989

As was the case this season, Nebraska finished seventh in the Big Eight with a 4-10 record. The Cornhuskers were defeated soundly by Missouri in the first round of the Big Eight Tournament. They defeated Arkansas State, 81-79, in the first round of the NIT at the Devaney Sports Center, and then were sent to Columbus, Ohio, for a rematch against Ohio State.

The Buckeyes, who defeated Nebraska, 103-76, at Columbus in mid-December, did it a second time, though by a less-lopsided 85-74. ■

Nebraska's recruiting classes may not earn top rankings from various services, but a No. 1 final ranking last year sits much better with the team



CLASS ACTION

Rome wasn't built in a day, as the saying goes. Neither was Nebraska's 1994 national championship team. It took nearly four years for Tom Osborne to assemble the pieces he needed for his ultimate checkmate.

During a news conference to announce the Nebraska football team's 1995 recruiting class, Osborne expressed his oft-repeated opinion of the self-proclaimed experts who rank the nation's recruits.

"I don't know how they'll be rated," Osborne said of his recruits. "I, frankly, don't care."

The credibility of such analysts has been called into question in the aftermath of Nebraska's undefeated and untied national championship season in 1994. None of the five Cornhusker recruiting classes that contributed to last season's success was highly ranked by the most well-known "experts," who typically begin by placing Notre Dame's recruits at or near the top of the rankings and work down from there.

A consensus ranking by the three or four most consulted national recruiting services of Nebraska's recruiting classes from 1990 through 1994 wouldn't have put the Cornhuskers in the Top 10.

Critics said the recruiting classes were sub-par, but Tom Osborne proved them wrong by winning a national title in 1994

Typically, Nebraska was ranked in the high teens or low- to mid-20s. Not bad, but not the stuff of which national titles are fashioned, if the "experts" are to be believed.

One popular analyst described Nebraska's 1991 class, for example, as "solid but unspectacular." Among those scholarship recruits in 1991 were Tony Veland, Troy Dumas, Dwayne Harris, Phil Ellis, Doug Colman, Christian Peter, Aaron Graham, Clester Johnson and Brook Berringer. Unspectacular? The proof is in the results.

The first class on which the Cornhuskers' first national title since 1971 was built, the one in 1990, included scholarship recruits such as Terry Connealy, Zach Wiegert, Cory Schlesinger, Donta Jones, Ed Stewart, Rob Zatechka, Brenden Stai

and Bill Humphrey. It was regarded as mediocre. Yet it included three All-Americans, an Outland Award winner and a Butkus Award candidate during 1994, as well as two I-backs who are playing in the NFL: Calvin Jones and Derek Brown.

The 1990 class also included walk-ons who contributed to the national championship, most notably Matt Shaw, Joel Wilks and Jason Pesterfield. It was a "so-so group, one prominent recruiting analyst claimed. Not.

The Cornhuskers' 1992 recruiting class probably had the highest consensus rating, based, in part, on the presence of quarterback Tommie Frazier. It also included Kareem Moss, a junior college transfer, and several athletes who played key roles in the pursuit of the national championship. Among them were Eric Stokes, Damon Benning, Clinton Childs and Larry Townsend.

The 1993 and 1994 classes can't be properly evaluated yet because most of those players are still developing and could contribute to a repeat national championship.

So as the Cornhuskers prepare for the 1995 season, in which they will be ranked in the top three of the pre-season poll, we've broken down the classes from 1991-94. ■

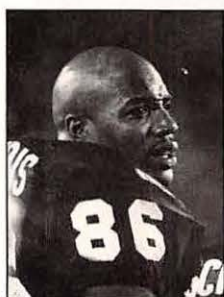
W

hile some of the key pieces to the national title came in the Class of 1990 — offensive linemen Rob Zatechka, Brenden Stai, and

Zach Wiegert, fullback Cory Schlesinger and defensive captains Ed Stewart and Terry Connealy — it may have been the Class of 1991 that ultimately shaped the team.

The recruiting services wrote the 1991 class off as another average Nebraska class — talented backs, lumbering offensive linemen and overachieving defensive players. Little did they know, or understand, that Nebraska was reshaping its team starting with the defense.

In fact, the only prep All-American the Huskers signed was outside linebacker Dwayne Harris of



Dwayne Harris

Bessemer, Ala. As Alabama and Auburn ran each other down trying to sway Harris, he decided to go with the Huskers, who stressed academics instead of national titles.

But from the list of lesser known recruits came defensive mainstays Christian Peter, Doug Colman, Phil Ellis and Tony Veland. All started in the 1995 title game except for Colman, who split time with Ellis.

Troy Dumas, who was converted from the secondary to linebacker, also started against Miami.

When Nebraska started to look for their future quarterback the name that surfaced most was All-American Kordell Stewart of Marrero, La. Stewart, an option quarterback wizard, passed for 923 yards and 17 touchdowns while rushing for another 924 and 23 scores during his senior year. But fresh off a national title, Colorado used its influence to snag Stewart along with 13 other prep All-Americans.

Undaunted, Nebraska focused its efforts on a little-known signal caller out of Goodland, Kan. — Brook Berringer — who coaches considered the best “mechanical” thrower they had seen.

“Berringer won’t get us any rating points with the recruiting analysts, but he has great speed and is a good thrower,” Tom Osborne said following signing day. ■

CLASS OF 1991

Player	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown (HS)	1995 Classification
Ernie Beler	LB	6-4	205	Chicago, Ill. (Simeon)	NA
Belar graduated in 1993 after starting two years at linebacker. Recruited as a defensive back, he was moved to linebacker when the Huskers switched to a 4-3 defense to take advantage of his speed.					
Trumane Bell	TE	6-3	215	Highland, Kan. (Highland CC)	NA
Played in 22 games in two years before finishing his career after the 1993 season. Recruited as a receiver, he moved to tight end because of his height and his blocking ability. Career highlight may have been the 29-yard catch in the closing minutes of the 1994 Orange Bowl. The catch set up what could have been the game-winning 45-yard field goal, but the Byron Bennett kick went wide left.					
Ken Bello	OLB	6-2	220	North Bergen, N.J.	NA
An honorable mention All-American, Bello never played for the Huskers, leaving before the fall.					
•Brook Berringer	QB	6-4	210	Goodland, Kan.	Sr.
Berringer came into his own as a junior when he replaced the injured Tommie Frazier at quarterback. An all-state selection coming out of high school, critics maintained Berringer could not handle Nebraska's run-oriented offense. But he proved the naysayers wrong as he guided Nebraska to an undefeated 1994 season. During the miraculous run Berringer hit on 94-of-151 passes for 1,295 yards and 10 touchdowns. Berringer also rushed for 279 yards while recovering from a collapsed lung.					
Anthony Cole	CB	5-11	160	Torrance, Calif. (North)	NA
A two-time All-California selection. But Cole left school before playing.					
•Doug Colman	MLB	6-3	240	Ventnor, N.J. (Ocean City)	Sr.
Colman started the first eight games in 1994, finishing as the team's seventh-leading tackler with 51 stops (17 solo) and two sacks. In the Kickoff Classic against No. 24 West Virginia, the N.J. native led the team with a career-high eight tackles. Was one of three freshmen to play in 1991.					
Troy Dumas	SLB	6-4	220	Cheyenne, Wyo. (East)	NA
Recruited as a strong safety, Dumas was another player switched to linebacker to better utilize his speed. In 1994, his first year at linebacker, he finished third on the team with 69 tackles (38 solo) and earned first-team All-Big Eight honors. Dumas was responsible for ending future NFL quarterback Chad May's streak of 186 passing attempts without a pick.					
•Phil Ellis	MLB	6-2	225	Grand Island, Neb.	Sr.
The state of Nebraska Defensive Player of the Year, Ellis lettered in 1992 after playing in 10 games. In 1993 he played in all 11 games, recording 13 tackles. Last year he finished fifth on the team in tackles.					
•Mark Gilman	TE	6-3	240	Kalispell, Mont. (Flathead)	Sr.
A reliable and very good tight end in Nebraska's offensive schemes, Gilman quietly finished tied for third on the team in reception in 1994, with 17 for 196 yards and one touchdown.					
•Aaron Graham	C	6-3	280	Denton, Texas	Sr.
A two-year starter at center, Graham will be the only returning starter from last year's offensive line, which has been billed as the best in college football history. A two-time Academic All-Big Eight selection, Graham recorded 79 “pancakes” as a junior.					
Charles Green	FS	6-3	185	Ruston, La.	NA
A star on the nation's No. 2 high school team, Green chose Nebraska over Louisiana State. But he transferred to Louisiana Tech when he did not start immediately.					
•Luther Hardin	OLB	6-2	213	O'Fallon, Ill. (Althoff Catholic)	Sr.
Moved to outside linebacker from defensive tackle last year and was a reserve. Redshirted in 1991.					
Dwayne Harris	OLB	6-2	225	Bessemer, Ala. (Jess Lanier)	NA
The former USA Today prep All-American played a key role in 1994 while earning second-team All-Big Eight. He started every game at left outside linebacker and finished as the team's eighth-leading tackler with 43 stops. Grabbed everyone's attention when he filled in for Trev Alberts when he went down with an elbow injury against Oklahoma in 1993. In the game Harris had a career-high seven tackles and three sacks. In the 1995 Orange Bowl he sacked Miami quarterback Frank Costa for a safety.					
•Clester Johnson	WB	5-11	210	Bellevue, Neb. (West)	Sr.
Bounced from quarterback to defensive back and finally to wingback, where he backed up Abdul Muhammad in 1994. He started only two games last year and had four catches for 93 yards.					
Ralph Lott	CB	5-10	160	Live Oak, Fla. (Suwannee)	NA
Nebraska's first defensive recruit from the state of Florida left school without contributing.					
Dennis Martin	DT	6-3	240	Pittsburgh, Pa. (Perry)	NA
A small, mobile defensive lineman, Martin was expected to contribute following a redshirt year in 1991. But before he got the chance he left.					
Abdul Muhammad	WB	5-9	160	Compton, Calif. (Carson)	NA
Pound for pound Muhammad probably was one of the gutsiest players ever recruited at Nebraska. His ability to catch over the middle and great speed made him the home-run threat Nebraska needed to open the running game. He led all receivers with 23 catches for 360 yards and two scores in 1994. Was never lower than second-string during his career, which began his freshman year.					
•Steve Ott	OG	6-4	275	Henderson, Neb.	Sr.
Earned letters in 1992 and 1993, but saw limited action last year after breaking his left foot during the Kansas State game. Ott was the seventh man on the offensive line.					
•Christian Peter	DT	6-2	285	Locust, N.J. (Middletown South)	Sr.
Peter finally earned a starting job in 1994 and made a huge impact. A second-team All-Big Eight pick, he finished second on the team in tackles with 71 (32 solo) tackles. Redshirted in 1992.					
Robert Smith	OL	6-3	280	East Chicago, Ind. (Central)	NA
The Indiana Player of the Year left Nebraska before playing.					
Tom Steer	WB	5-11	185	Crete, Neb.	NA
Left school before the 1993 season, transferring to Hastings College. Saw limited action at NU.					
•Tony Veland	FS	6-2	200	Omaha, Neb. (Benson)	Sr.
Recruited as a quarterback, Veland moved to defense when Tommie Frazier came in and took over the job as a true freshman. Started 10 games at free safety in 1994, filling in for the injured Mike Minter.					
• Scheduled to return in 1995					

CLASS OF 1992

Player	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown (HS)	1995 Classification
•Larry Arnold	OLB	6-5	215	Copley, Ohio (Copley)	Jr.
Although Arnold signed in 1992, he didn't earn a scholarship until 1993, when he joined the team on a full-time basis. As a redshirt sophomore last year he played a back-up role at SAM linebacker.					
•Damon Benning	IB	5-10	175	Omaha, Neb. (Northwest)	Jr.
Served as Lawrence Phillips' backup at I-back last year while alternating with Clinton Childs. Benning finished as the team's fourth-leading rusher with 367 yards and five touchdowns in 12 games. As a redshirt freshman he started two games in 1993 and finished the season with 55 carries for 323 yards.					
Willis Brown	WB	5-8	165	Edmond, Okla. (Edmond)	NA
An all-state running back on the prep level, Brown's promising collegiate career came to an abrupt end when he injured his neck during spring practice in 1993.					
•Clinton Childs	IB	6-0	200	Omaha, Neb. (North)	Sr.
Like Arnold, Childs did not earn a scholarship until 1993. During his sophomore year he found the backfield crowded and saw only limited action. Childs did manage to rush for 96 yards and one touchdown. Last year he alternated with Benning and finished the year as Nebraska's third-leading rusher with 62 carries for 395 yards.					
•Chris Dishman	OL	6-4	305	Cozad, Neb.	Jr.
A backup to Lance Lundberg at left tackle in 1993, Dishman saw considerable playing time in 1994 as a reserve left tackle behind two-year starter Rob Zatechka. He played in every game last year.					
•Tommie Frazier	QB	6-2	205	Bradenton, Fla. (Manatee)	Sr.
The top prize in the class of 1992, Frazier took over the starting job seven games into his freshman season at Missouri and it took a blood clot in his left leg to get him out last year. He missed most of 1994, but came back to lead the Huskers to a come-from-behind victory in the fourth quarter of the 1995 Orange Bowl. For his career, Frazier has completed 140-of-306 passes for 2,159 yards and 26 touchdowns. On the ground, where he is most effective, the nation's top option quarterback has rushed for 1,351 yards and 22 scores. Will earn preseason Heisman votes along with Lawrence Phillips.					
•Jon Hesse	MLB	6-4	225	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)	Jr.
Served as a backup MIKE linebacker to Phil Ellis and Doug Colman in 1994. Playing in 13 games, he recorded 11 tackles (five solo).					
•Mike Minter	FS/Rover	5-10	175	Lawton, Okla.	Jr.
The secondary "quarterback" suffered a season-ending knee injury against Texas Tech in the second game of the 1994 season. In two games he had recorded seven sacks. Playing in every game in 1993 as Toby Wright's backup, Minter recorded 23 tackles. His surgery was successful, and he is expected to earn a starting spot in 1995.					
•Ed Morrow	OLB	6-4	230	Ferguson, Mo. (St. Louis McCluer)	Jr.
Morrow has seen limited action as a reserve since redshirting in 1992.					
Kareem Moss	CB	5-10	185	Spartanburg, S.C. (Garden City CC, Kan.)	NA
Redshirted in 1992, but a key player the last two years. He started every game at rover in 1994 and his interception in the Orange Bowl sealed the national title. Last year he finished as the team's fourth-leading tackler with 66 stops while earning second-team All-Big Eight honors.					
•Jeff Ogard	DT	6-6	290	St. Paul, Neb.	Jr.
A third-string defensive tackle behind Christian Peter last year, Ogard redshirted in 1992.					
Ben Rutz	QB	6-1	180	Oklahoma City, Okla. (Putnam City)	NA
An all-state quarterback on the prep level, Rutz transferred, unhappy with playing time.					
•Scott Saltsman	DT	6-2	255	Wichita Falls, Texas (Rider)	Jr.
Saltsman played in eight games as a sophomore, tallying eight tackles (two solo). He played in five games in 1993 and had one tackle after redshirting his first year in 1992.					
T.J. Scribner	TE/LB	6-3	220	Omaha, Neb.	NA
An eight-man sensation in high school, Scribner now is an undergraduate assistant coach with the team while completing his education.					
Marvin Sims	IB	5-9	175	Apple Valley, Minn.	NA
Suffered a knee injury as a redshirted freshman. He transferred to Northern Iowa before the 1994 season.					
Jim Stiebel	OG	6-4	255	Belleville, Ill.	NA
After freshman year transferred to Kansas, where he started last year at offensive center.					
•Eric Stokes	DB	5-10	175	Lincoln, Neb. (East)	Jr.
Stokes has been plagued by injuries during his career, but he stepped up when Mike Minter went down last year. He finished as the team's 12th leading tackler, with 36 stops.					
•Ryan Terwilliger	WLB	6-5	220	Grant, Neb.	Jr.
Backing up Ed Stewart last year, Terwilliger played in every game and recorded 19 tackles. He played in six games in 1993 (two tackles) after redshirting in 1992.					
•Larry Townsend	DT	6-4	285	San Jose, Calif. (Yerba Buena)	Jr.
Played in 10 games as a sophomore, racking up six tackles. Recorded a career-high three stops against Pacific.					
Leonard Washington	DT	6-4	275	Omaha, Neb.	NA
An all-county pick as a high school senior, he had 165 tackles and 18 sacks during his final two prep years. Though heavily recruited, he never enrolled at Nebraska.					
•Riley Washington	SE	5-9	170	Chula Vista, Calif. (San Diego SW)	Jr.
Has earned more recognition for his feats on the track team, where he has won two All-American honors, but still is a valued member of the receiving corps. Although he played in every game in 1994, he had no catches. As a freshman he played in four games and caught one pass for 15 yards.					
Toby Wright	S	6-1	205	Phoenix, Ariz.	NA
Started at rover in 1993 after transferring from junior college. After stellar senior year Wright became a first-round pick in the NFL draft.					
• Scheduled to return in 1995					

An avid fisherman, Tom Osborne may have reeled in the biggest catch of his life in 1992 when he persuaded All-America quarterback Tommie Frazier to come to Nebraska and help him win a national championship.

Considered one of the top athletes at any position in the country, Frazier narrowed his choices to Notre Dame, Clemson and Nebraska during the final week before signing day.

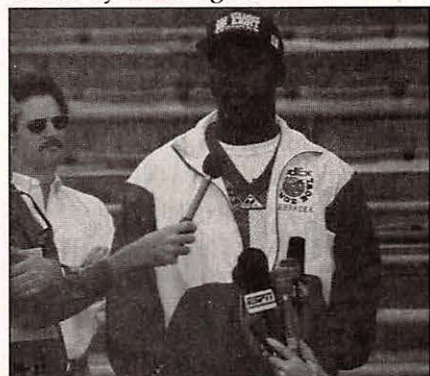
Most observers across the country thought Clemson had the inside track and Notre Dame was the long-shot. For the native Floridian, it seemed Nebraska would finish a distant third. But the Huskers got Frazier's last official visit, and his signature.

In addition to Frazier, the Class of 1992 yielded keys to the future, including rover Kareem Moss (a starter in 1994) and free safety Mike Minter. An injury left Minter watching the title game from the sidelines, but he will be a key in Nebraska's attempt to repeat in 1995.

Safety Toby Wright, a junior college transfer from Phoenix College, wasn't around in 1994 after using up his eligibility. But in 1993 he was one of the team's top tacklers and was drafted by the former Los Angeles Rams.

Before Frazier became a reality Nebraska went after another highly touted quarterback in Ben Rutz. But with Frazier's emergence as the quarterback of the future the former prep All-American left.

The class also included I-back Damon Benning, who shared back-up duties in 1994, as well as outside linebacker Ryan Terwilliger and split end Riley Washington. ■



Nebraska believed it had a legitimate shot at a national title with Tommie Frazier at quarterback. Last year that assumption proved true.

The group of 22 athletes who joined the Husker program in 1993 played a fairly large part in the 1994 national championship season.

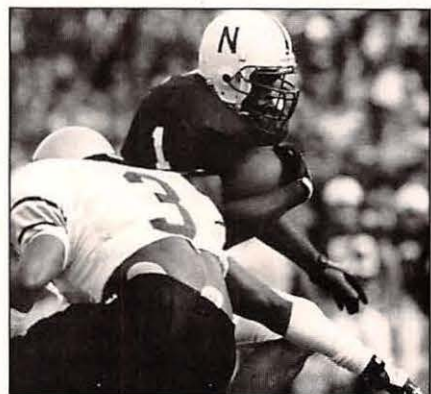
Three starters — I-back Lawrence Phillips, tight end Eric Alford and cornerback Tyrone Williams — were part of this class.

Phillips was the prize catch in 1993 and hasn't disappointed the Cornhusker staff during his two seasons. Entering the 1995 campaign, Phillips has rushed for 2,318 yards.

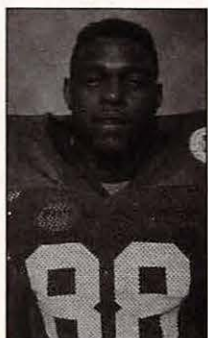
As a freshman he backed up Calvin Jones at I-back and gained a season-high 139 yards against UCLA that fall in just his second game. His sophomore campaign saw him carry the offense while injuries at quarterback hampered the team. Phillips gained 126 yards on 31 carries against Kansas State when third-string quarterback Matt Turman started the game.

Williams started 12 games in 1994 at cornerback and picked off three passes.

Alford was the Huskers' biggest receiving threat from the tight end position, catching 14 passes during the regular season and a two-point conversion pass from Tommie Frazier in the Orange Bowl. ■



Lawrence Phillips may have been the jewel of the Class of 1993, but players such as Tyrone Williams (below left) and Eric Alford (below right) were keys in winning the national title.



CLASS OF 1993

Player	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown (HS)	1995 Classification
•Matt Aden	LB	6-3	205	Omaha, Neb. (Northwest)	Soph.
Played in four games as a backup at SAM linebacker last year and recorded four tackles. Redshirted in 1993.					
•Eric Alford	TE	6-4	225	Highpoint, N.C. (Garden City CC, Kan.)	NA
Alternating time with fellow first-teamers Mark Gilman and Matt Shaw, Alford played in 11 games and led the team in touchdown receptions with four last year. He finished fifth on the team in receptions with 14 (most for a tight end since Johnny Mitchell's 31 in 1991). In 1993, he caught 14 receptions in a reserve roll.					
•Eric Anderson	OT/DT	6-4	280	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)	Soph.
After redshirting as a freshman, Anderson saw considerable action as a third-string right tackle behind Outland Trophy winner Zach Wiegert in 1994. Will probably move into a starting roll in the fall.					
•Lance Brown	WB	5-10	170	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista)	Soph.
Redshirted in 1993 and did not catch a pass in 1994. As a senior Brown caught 44 passes for 922 yards and seven touchdowns.					
•Tim Carpenter	TE	6-3	230	Columbus, Neb. (Columbus)	Soph.
Originally recruited as a fullback, Carpenter moved to tight end last year and played in eight games as a backup. A first-team Super State running back, he rushed for 1,224 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior.					
•Leslie Dennis	CB	5-10	165	Bradenton, Fla. (Southeast)	Soph.
Last year Dennis started one game (West Virginia) and played in all 13 as a redshirted freshman. Recording 16 tackles and one interception, Dennis proved to be a valuable addition in the injury-depleted secondary. Blessed with great speed.					
•Josh Heskew	C	6-3	255	Yukon, Okla. (Mustang)	Soph.
Moved to the center position after being recruited as a tight end/nose guard. Following a knee injury suffered during an Oklahoma all-state game, Heskew redshirted as a freshman.					
•Vershan Jackson	FB	6-1	215	Omaha, Neb. (South)	Soph.
Played in three games last year and rushed for 12 yards. Redshirted in 1993. A first-team all-state selection as a senior, Jackson rushed for 1,278 yards in eight games and had the second-best average per game in Omaha metro schools, with 159.8 yards per game.					
•Jason Jenkins	DT	6-5	265	Mays Landing, N.J. (Dodge City CC, Kan.)	Sr.
Saw limited action in three games as a junior after redshirting in 1993. Jenkins led Dodge City with 58 tackles (21 solo) earning first-team All-Jayhawk Conference selections.					
•Sean Noster	OLB	6-3	215	San Antonio, Texas (John Marshall)	Soph.
Played in five games (five tackles) as a reserve outside linebacker in 1994 before a separated shoulder cut his season short. Redshirted in 1993.					
•Jason Peter	DT	6-5	285	Middletown, N.J. (Milford Academy)	Soph.
Younger brother of Husker starter Christian, Jason redshirted in 1993 and saw action in seven games in 1994 recording eight tackles (two solo).					
•Lawrence Phillips	IB	6-1	205	West Covina, Calif. (Baldwin Park)	Jr.
Phillips was the jewel of this class as he made an immediate contribution backing up starting I-back Calvin Jones. As a freshman he rushed for 508 yards and five scores. But it was last year that he truly became known nationally, earning second-team All-America and first-team Big Eight honors. He recorded a school-record 11 straight 100-yard rushing games to open the season before finishing with 1,722 yards and 16 touchdowns during the regular season. Phillips blistered Miami for 96 yards in the 1995 Orange Bowl. Should be a Heisman Trophy candidate as a junior.					
•Fred Pollack	OT	6-4	290	Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)	Soph.
Redshirted in 1993. Pollack was a fourth-string left tackle in 1994.					
Justin Stephens	LB	6-3	215	Palmetto, Fla. (Manatee)	NA
After redshirting in 1993, Stephens left school prior to the 1994 season. Listed as one of the top defensive players in the South coming out of high school, he racked up 140 tackles and 10 sacks as a prep senior.					
•Aaron Taylor	OG	6-2	290	Wichita Falls, Texas (Rider)	Soph.
As a redshirted freshman last year he played in every game and was a member of the PAT and field goal units. He served as a reserve at left guard and joined the 60-man travel roster when Steve Ott broke his foot. Redshirted in 1993.					
Shane Wells	P/PK	5-7	160	Odessa, Texas (Permian)	NA
Was expected to compete for the kicking chores last year, but transferred to Texas A&M.					
•Tyrone Williams	CB	6-0	180	Palmetto, Fla. (Manatee)	Sr.
Started 12 games in 1994 as a junior and finished as the team's 11th leading tackler with 38 (31 solo) stops. He finished second on the team to Barron Miles with five breakups and second to Miles in interceptions with three. He joined the program in 1993 and saw extensive action during a sophomore season in which he recorded 29 (14 solo) tackles and one interception.					
Ramone Worthy	LB	6-1	215	Camden, N.J. (Woodrow Wilson)	NA
A distant cousin of former Nebraska Heisman Trophy winner Mike Rozier, Worthy was involved in an off-campus incident and left school before fall practice last year. A big-time running back prospect who rushed for 1,554 yards in nine games as a senior, Worthy redshirted in 1993.					
•Trampis Wrice	CB	5-9	160	Valdosta, Ga. (Valdosta)	Jr.
An all-stater on the prep level, Wrice joined the program in 1993 as a sophomore and redshirted. In 1994, Wrice was a fourth-stringer at cornerback and recorded five tackles.					
•Jon Zatechka	OT	6-3	285	Lincoln, Neb. (East)	Soph.
The younger brother of last year's starting left tackle, Rob Zatechka, Jon served as a third-stringer at right guard.					
• Scheduled to return in 1995					

CLASS OF 1994

Player	Position	Height	Weight	Hometown (HS)	1995 Classification
•Michael Booker	CB	6-2	200	Oceanside, Calif. (El Camino)	Jr.
Booker signed with Nebraska in 1993, but did not use a scholarship until 1994 as a sophomore. He played in seven games in his first year of action making two solo tackles and assisting on two others.					
Ted Butler	OL	6-1	240	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)	NA
Butler redshirted in 1994. In February 1995 he announced he would transfer to Boise State so that he could wrestle as well as play football.					
•Kenny Cheatham	WR	6-4	195	Phoenix, Ariz. (South Mountain)	Soph.
Cheatham sat out last year after committing to Nebraska in July. A multi-athlete, he also had scholarship offers for track and field from UCLA, Auburn, Louisiana State and Florida State. As a senior he made 31 catches for 929 yards and 12 touchdowns. His 29 yards-per-catch average is still in the Arizona record books as the fourth-best output in prep history.					
•Tray Crayton	DB	6-2	195	Oceanside, Calif. (El Camino)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. Was a high school teammate of Michael Booker. Crayton was a <i>SuperPrep</i> and <i>BlueChip Illustrated</i> All-American on the high school level after rushing for 893 yards and 12 touchdowns. Also the team's quarterback, he threw for 751 yards and 12 touchdowns while scampering for another 14 on the ground.					
•Constantine Dumitrescu	OL	6-5	300	Hayward, Calif. (Moreau)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. The native of Romania played tight end as a sophomore and junior before moving to the line as a senior.					
Jon Elder	QB	6-3	195	Sioux City, Iowa (West)	NA
The first quarterback signee since Tommie Frazier inked with Nebraska in 1992, Elder decided he wanted to play earlier than coaches were comfortable with and transferred before the season. With the quarterback problems that arose after Frazier went down with blood clots, Elder may have received his shot if he had exercised patience.					
•Darin Erstad	PK/P	6-2	195	Jamestown, N.D. (Jamestown)	Jr.
An All-American on the baseball field, Erstad joined the Husker football team in the fall and immediately won the punting job. Erstad averaged 42.6 yards per kick last year and also connected on 3-of-8 field goals. He also showed he possessed a strong leg, and took over the kickoffs chores as well.					
•Jay Foreman	DB/WR	6-3	195	Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie)	Fr.
The son of former NFL great Chuck Foreman, Jay redshirted in 1994. He rushed for 930 yards and had 421 yards in receptions his senior year in high school.					
•Sheldon Jackson	WR	6-3	205	Diamond Bar, Calif. (Damien)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. Jackson was named to the Best in the West by the <i>Long Beach Press-Telegram</i> as a senior despite playing in just seven games because of a knee injury. Jackson caught 18 passes for 238 yards and four touchdowns before the injury.					
•Brian Knuckles	IB	5-11	195	Charlotte, N.C. (Coffeyville CC, Kan.)	Jr.
The only junior college transfer who signed with Nebraska in 1994, Knuckles redshirted last year. Often compared to former Coffeyville and Heisman Trophy winner, Mike Rozier, Knuckles will get a chance to break into NU's loaded backfield this spring.					
•John Livingston	SE	6-0	175	San Marcos, Calif. (Palomar CC, Calif.)	Sr.
Transferred from Arizona State in 1994. At ASU he caught one pass for 28 yards in 1993 before an injury ended his season. He saw limited action at split end for Nebraska last year as a junior.					
•Octavious McFarlin	DB	6-0	180	Bastrop, Texas (Bastrop)	Soph.
Played in eight games and made 15 tackles and broke up a pass at rover. McFarlin came out of a planned redshirt season when the secondary was hit hard by injuries, including the loss of Mike Minter.					
•Erik Nelson	DL/OL	6-4	250	Iowa City, Iowa (Iowa City)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. A late addition to the class, Nebraska coaches like his speed and expect him to compete in 1995. A 48-foot shot putter for his prep team, Nelson earned first-team All-State honors in a coaches poll and was the runner-up for Iowa Player of the Year honors.					
•David Reddick	WR	5-10	175	Camden, N.J. (Woodrow Wilson)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. Reddick caught 15 passes for 196 yards as a senior.					
•Dorrick Roy	WR	6-4	220	Inglewood, Calif. (Montclair Prep)	Fr.
A high school All-American according to <i>SuperPrep</i> , Roy redshirted in 1994. As a senior he caught 27 passes for 509 yards and three scores. As a linebacker he recorded 113 tackles and 12 sacks.					
•Mike Rucker	LB	6-6	225	St. Joseph, Mo. (Benton)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. Caught 15 passes for 300 yards as a senior.					
•Travis Toline	LB	6-4	220	Wahoo, Neb. (Wahoo)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. Recorded 78 tackles in eight games as a senior on the prep level.					
•Brandt Wade	OL	6-3	275	Springfield, Neb. (Platteview)	Fr.
After a standout prep career, he redshirted during his first season as a Husker. Wade was the first player at Platteview to earn a football scholarship to Nebraska.					
•Jamel Williams	LB	6-2	195	Merrillville, Ind. (Merrillville)	Soph.
Was a reserve WILL linebacker in 1994 as a sophomore (his first year on the team). He played in 10 games and was in on six tackles. A finalist for Indiana Mr. Football honors, Williams tore the ACL in his left knee during the 1993 all-star game.					
•Jason Wiltz	DL	6-4	280	New Orleans, La. (St. Augustine)	Fr.
Redshirted in 1994. An honorable mention All-American by <i>USA Today</i> , Wiltz made 76 tackles and 12 sacks as a senior. <i>SuperPrep</i> rated Wiltz as the nation's fourth-best defensive lineman in 1994.					
•Grant Wistrom	OLB	6-5	230	Webb City, Mo. (Webb City)	Soph.
Saw extensive action behind Donta Jones at the right outside linebacker position as a true freshman. Made 4.5 sacks and 36 total tackles in 12 games. Drew comparisons to Butkus Award winner Trev Alberts after recording 122 tackles, eight sacks and a blocked punt as a senior. Everybody's All-American, Wistrom turned down offers from Michigan, Stanford, Miami and Oklahoma in favor of playing in Lincoln.					

• Scheduled to return in 1995

It's too early to judge the success of the 1994 class since most of the recruits redshirted during the national championship season.

However, the few newcomers who saw action in 1994 made an impact, such as outside linebacker Grant Wistrom and punter/kicker Darin Erstad.

Wistrom was one of two true freshmen to play last year. He recorded 4.5 sacks in a reserve roll.

"He's played at a level that is commensurate with a lot of our senior players," said Tom Osborne following the season. "Most of the players we've had who have contributed as true freshman, like Tommie Frazier and Will Shields, it has taken them maybe five or six games into the season before they began to assert themselves.

"Grant's been able to do that almost since day one."

Erstad, a Nebraska baseball player and projected first-round MLB draftee, joined the team for fall practice and played a significant role with effective punting and long kick-offs. He also showed his athletic ability when he caught a two-point conversion pass from holder Jon Vedral against Oklahoma State.

Freshman Octavious McFarlin ended the year as a backup to Kareem Moss at rover and sophomore cornerback Michael Booker, sophomore WILL linebacker Jamel Williams and junior split end John Livingston (who transferred from Arizona State) also contributed in reserve roles. ■



Grant Wistrom's (98) impressive freshman year at outside linebacker earned him comparisons to 1994 NFL first round pick Trev Alberts.

PREVIEW

From page 17

senior Aaron Penland, an aggressive special teams player, as the backup.

Terrell Farley, a transfer from Independence, Kan., Junior College could play immediately in the fall, McBride said. Farley, who has outstanding coverage speed, might end up alternating with Terwilliger, depending on the situation. Terwilliger has been especially strong in defending the run.

Junior Jamel Williams, another fast weakside linebacker, is recovering from shoulder surgery and might miss most if not all of spring practice.

Strongside linebacker appears to be the more uncertain of the outside positions, with junior Larry Arnold, sophomores Sean Noster and Matt Aden and redshirted freshman Jay Foreman among the candidates to replace Troy Dumas there going into the spring. If Tony Samuel, the outside linebackers coach, isn't satisfied with the play of the strongside backers during the spring, and even if he is, Tony Ortiz, a high school All-American from Waterbury, Conn., could make a significant impact at the position as a true freshman.

Kareem Sears, another incoming freshman, also will get a look at linebacker during fall camp.

After years of playing in the shadow of other defensive standouts, defensive tackle Christian Peter (55) finally will get the spotlight in 1995.

Sophomore Grant Wistrom had a sizable impact last season as a rush end. Junior Jared Tomich enters spring practice as the No. 1 outside linebacker on the left side, with senior Luther Hardin and redshirted freshman Mike Rucker among those also competing at rush end.

Senior Christian Peter returns at nose tackle. McBride must settle on someone to play alongside him as well as backups at both tackle positions. Juniors Scott Saltsman and Larry Townsend will begin the spring backing up Peter. But Townsend could move over, according to McBride. Sophomore Jason Peter, Christian's brother, junior Jeff Ogard and senior Jason Jenkins are other tackle candidates.

Redshirted freshmen Jason Wiltz and Erik Nelson also will figure into the mix at some point. Of the two, Wiltz appears to have progressed further going into the spring, according to McBride.

Junior Mike Minter is coming off the severe knee injury he suffered late in the Texas Tech game, a welcome return that helps soften the blow of losing Barron Miles and Kareem Moss. Minter probably will concentrate on strong safety, with senior Tony Veland as the No. 1 free safety, backed up by sophomore Octavious McFarlin and Eric Stokes, respectively. The versatile Stokes also will play cornerback.

Senior Tyrone Williams is a proven talent at one corner, with



Outside linebacker Jared Tomich, one of the true surprises last spring, will be a starter as drills start.

sophomore Leslie Dennis moving up at the other. Among the other young players who will get a good look are junior Michael Booker, who was pulled out of a redshirt last season because of injuries, and redshirted freshman Tray Crayton.

The almost-certain departure of Darin Erstad by way of the major league baseball draft would leave a significant void in the kicking game. In Erstad's absence, walk-ons Jesse Kosch and Ted Retzlaff will be among those who will get a good spring look, Kosch as a punter, Retzlaff as a place-kicker.

Frazier could probably punt in a pinch. But he'll be busy in the spring trying to prove he should be the starting quarterback. That's chal-



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